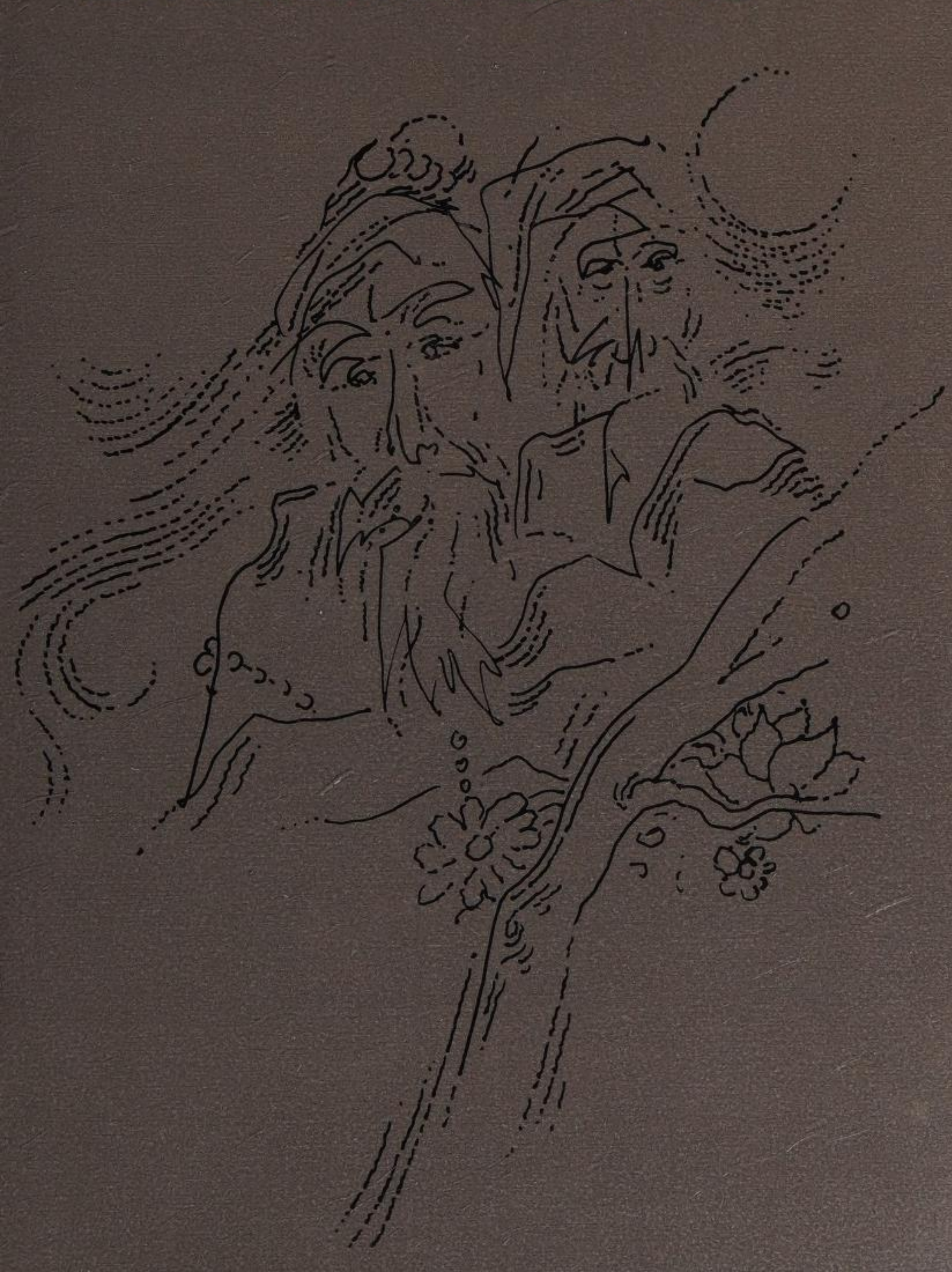
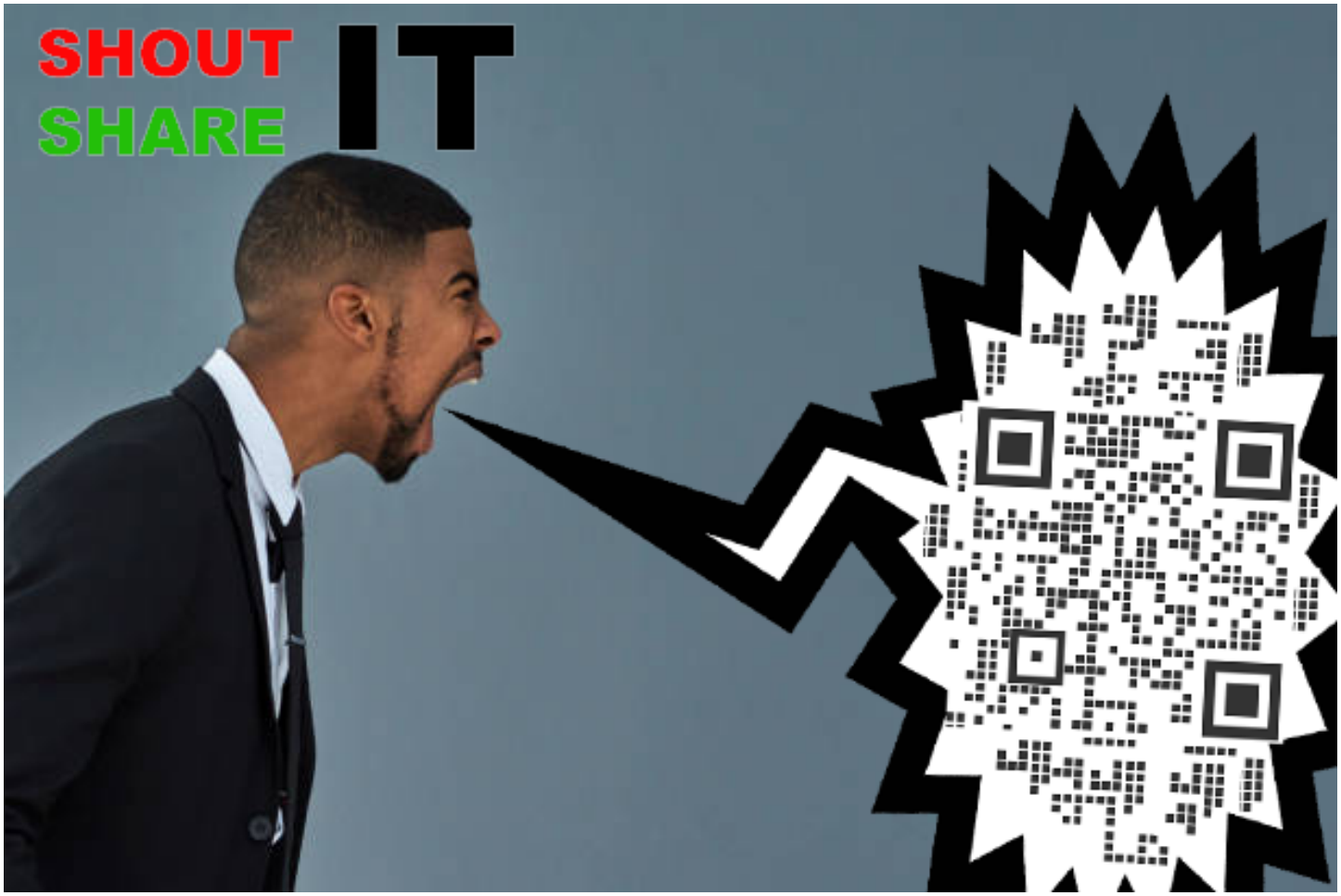
LIFE IN THE UPANISHADS

Dr. Shubhra Sharma

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The Book

The Upanishads have long fascinated Indian and foreign thinkers alike. The rich abundance of thought, the profound knowledge of Truth and life, the mystical pronouncements about the Individual and World Soul have inspired many writers and philosophers. But it was almost invariably the philosophical aspect of the Upanishads which attracted attention. The cultural aspect was lumped together with that of the preceding and succeeding eras. That the Upanishads were composed apart from the early Vedic literature and showed both continuation of and departure from its customs and practices was ignored altogether.

The present work is invaluable as a socio-cultural study of the Upanishads providing a deep insight into the land, the political and social institutions, the economy, religious ideas and philosophical urges of the people. It is based entirely on the older Upanishads: Aitareya, Bṛhadāraṇyaka, Chāndogya, Īśa, Katha, Kaushītaki, Kena, Maitrāyaṇī, Māṇḍūkya, Muṇḍaka, Praśna, Śvetāśvatara and Taittirīya. In this work the Upanishadic spirit is represented by thinkers like Satyakāma Jābāla who did not waver from truth about his doubtful parentage, Maitreyī who did not covet material wealth, Janaka, Ajātaśatru and Aśvapati devoted to the cause of learning, Gārgi Vācaknavī daring to question the mighty sage Yājñavalkya and Uddālaka Āruṇi ever on the move in quest of Truth.

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Shubhra Sharma

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Preface

The word Upanishad, to the layman, stands for deep mystical teachings. To the philosopher, it stands for the fountainhead from which all later systems spring forth. To the historian, it stands for the last phase of Vedic literature and culture when the lesser known protohistoric period was advancing forward to meet the era of recorded history. The Upanishads have always drawn attention of the scholars from far and near as sources of philosophy but their true worth as sources of history was not realized. Other phases of Vedic literature like the Ṛgveda, Atharvaveda, the Brāhmaṇas, the Gṛhya and Kalpa Sūtras had merited separate studies, but this was not true of the Upanishads. This fact was pointed out to me by Dr. B.S. Upadhyaya and Dr. V.N. Mishra. My supervisor Dr. (Mrs.) M. Jauhari also agreed that the topic had interesting possibilities. The present study strives to present a picture of the Upanishadic life: the people, their environment, their beliefs and practices, based on the Upanishads themselves, and not on the preceding and succeeding genres of literature.

Being a student of Sanskrit, I have relied mostly on the original sources and have sparingly dwelt on the secondary sources. This was done in order to present the most unbiased and clear picture of the Upanishadic people.

The thesis is divided into ten chapters. Chapter I, Introduction, deals with the term Upanishad and its meaning, the number of texts going under the name, the work done so far on the Upanishads, as also the justification of the present work. Chapter II, Vedic Antecedents, provides the backdrop. Chapter III, Geography, describes the terrain, people, flora and fauna reflected in the Upanishads. Chapter IV, State and Administration, gives details of the Upanishadic kings in relation to their officials and subjects. The Upanishads hardly

mention any non-monarchical state. Chapter V, Society, discusses the stratification of people into varṇas and āśramas. Some of the saṁskāras, which bind man from before his birth to after his death, have infiltrated the Upanishads and find mention here. The position of women in the Upanishadic society and the educational system are also described. Chapter VI, Material Life, presents the more tangible side. The food and drink, dress and ornaments, furniture and utensils and the modes of house-building and transport have found mention here. Chapter VII discusses Upanishadic economy which was neither entirely agrarian nor pastoral but a blend of the two, with some aid from trade and commerce as well. Chapter VIII, Religion, relates the Upanishadic idea of the godheads and their ways of worship. Chapter IX describes the philosophy of the Upanishads in a new perspective. It gives an account of the philosophical competitions prevalent at the time, the arena and the participants and then goes on to briefly sketch the emerging philosophy. Chapter X, Epilogue, embodies the conclusions drawn from the study.

It is my pleasant duty, at last, to record my most sincere and profound gratitude to my teachers in the Department of A.I.H.C. and Archeology. I belong to the old school and do not deem it proper to thank my elders. Thanks are given ever so lightly, a hundred times a day. People free themselves from obligation and gratitude by a formal word of thanks. Therefore I do not propose to thank my teachers. However, I would like to express the deep sense of obligation that I have for my Supervisor, Dr. (Mrs.) M. Jauhari, who gave me very valuable guidance with motherly affection. I am also beholden to Dr. M.P. Chaubey, without whom this thesis would not have been so comprehensive. Prof. K.K. Sinha and Dr. J.N. Tiwari greatly encouraged me and made valuable suggestions. I am also grateful to Prof. L. Gopal and Dr. P.K. Agrawal, who offered me useful tips during my pre-submission Seminar.

Mr. Ghildiyal and his staff in the Indology Library always managed to bring out old, forgotten volumes from the shelves when I needed them and thus earned my gratitude. I would like to thank Shri L.N. Tiwari, Librarian, Sarasvati Bhavan Library of the Sampurnanand Sanskrit Vishvavidyalaya, for

his co-operation. I also greatly appreciate the quick and efficient work of my typist, Shri P.K. Chatterjee.

Before I close, I must make a special mention of the eminent scholar, Dr. Bhagavat Sharan Upadhyaya, who saw my work several times and gave me the indulgence of discussing the subject freely with him. I respectfully acknowledge the everyday help which I received from my loving grandfather, Shri S.S. Sharma.

I will feel happy if this humble effort of mine will succeed in giving a clear picture of 'Life in the Upanishads' and I shall deem myself amply rewarded if these threads of thoughts are woven into some useful pattern by the learned scholars of the subject. This, I am sure, will prove a useful contribution towards better understanding of the Upanishadic people.

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List of Abbreviations

A.	Ancient
Ait.	Aitareya Upanishad
Ait. Āraṇ.	Aitareya Āraṇyaka
Ait. Br.	Aitareya Brāhmaṇa
Ār. or Āraṇ.	Āraṇyaka
AV	Atharva Veda
Bg.	Bhagavadgītā
Br.	Brāhmaṇa
Bṛhad.	Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upanishad
Chānd.	Chāndogya Upanishad
CSUP	Constructive Survey of Upanishadic Philosophy
Cz.	Civilization
Go. Br.	Gopatha Brāhmaṇa
Hist.	History
Ind.	India
Jaim. Up. Br.	Jaiminīya Upanishad Brāhmaṇa
JRAS	Journal of Royal Asiatic Society
Kaṭha	Kaṭha Upanishad
Kāṭh. Saṁ.	Kāṭhaka Saṁhitā
Kaush.	Kaushītaki Upanishad
Kaush. Br.	Kaushītaki Brāhmaṇa
Lit.	Literature
Mait.	Maitrāyaṇī Upanishad
Manu	Manu Smṛti
Māṇḍ.	Māṇḍūkya Upanishad
Muṇḍ.	Muṇḍaka Upanishad
Pañc. Br.	Pañcaviṁśati Brāhmaṇa
Princ. Upa.	The Principal Upanishads
PU	The Philosophy of the Upanishads
RV	Ṛgveda

RPVU	Religion and Philosophy of the Veda & Upanishads
Saṁ.	Saṁhitā
Śāṅkh. Āraṇ.	Śāṅkhyāyana Āraṇyaka
Sansk.	Sanskrit
Śat. Br.	Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa
Śvet.	Śvetāśvatara Upanishad
Taitt.	Taittirīya Upanishad
Taitt. Saṁ.	Taittirīya Saṁhitā
Up.	Upanishad
Vāj. Saṁ.	Vājasaneyī Saṁhitā

Scheme of Transliteration

Vowels	a ā i ī u ū ṛ e ai o au
Anusvāra	ṁ
Visarga	ḥ
Consonants	k kh g gh ṅ
	c ch j jh ñ
	ṭ ṭh ḍ ḍh ṇ
	t th d dh n
	p ph b bh m
	y r l v
	ś sh s h
	ksh tr jñ

LIFE IN THE UPANISHADS

CHAPTER I

Introduction

Vedic literature comprises four classes of writings—

1. Saṁhitā
2. Brāhmaṇa
3. Āraṇyaka
4. Upanishad.

The Saṁhitā part is the collection of hymns devoted to the gods individually or collectively, composed by different families of priests. The Brāhmaṇa texts give details for the sacrificial ceremonies, explaining the significance of each gesture. The Āraṇyakas or forest-treatises are symbolic ponderings of the forest-dwellers. The Upanishads, coming at the end of the Vedic Canon, record the philosophical speculations regarding the beginning and the end of the world, the transmigration of the soul and the ultimate unity of the individual with the World Soul.

The entire range of Vedic literature was composed thousands of years ago, but was handed down orally from generation to generation. Though the texts themselves have been preserved faithfully by a tremendously chaste and foolproof method of voice-reproduction, yet the time span is so long and the period shrouded in such a mysterious fog that no definite conclusions can be drawn about the actual chronology or authorship. Scholars differ over dates not by mere centuries but by millennia. Tilak[1] has put Vedic literature in

a time bracket of 6000 B.C. to 4500 B.C. on the basis of some astronomical evidence; on the other hand, Max Müller[2] attributes it to the period 1200 B.C. to 600 B.C. Winternitz[3] suggests that the beginning of Vedic literature was nearer 2500 B.C. or 2000 B.C. than 1500 B.C. or 1200 B.C. but 'prefers to mention no figures at all . . .' for 'it is a greater service to science to confess our ignorance than to deceive ourselves and others by producing dates which are no dates.'

The chronology is not very clear even within Vedic literature. The fourfold classification shows much overlapping and intermingling of the contents. The Īśa Upanishad is directly attached to the Saṁhitā. The Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upanishad forms a part of the Brāhmaṇa. The Aitareya Upanishad is incorporated right in the middle of the Āraṇyaka. Even the names bear evidence of this overlapping. The Bṛhadāraṇyaka shows the proper order of Brāhmaṇa-Āraṇyaka and Upanishad, but the Āraṇyaka and Upanishad are combined. The Kaushītaki Brāhmaṇa Upanishad excludes the Āraṇyaka altogether and the Jaiminīya Upanishad Brāhmaṇa reverses the order. Still, the Upanishads come at the end of the line as is apparent from their epithet Vedānta, literally 'the end of the Vedas'. The word Vedānta was used for the Upanishads probably because, being the most mysterious and difficult to understand, they were taught at the last stage, when the pupil was mature enough to grasp the gravity and complicated nature of the subject. Another possible explanation for the term lies in the fact that they proffered the aim of the study of the Vedas. The earlier part of the Vedas aims at obtaining material things whereas the Upanishads aim at obtaining the final goal, viz. Moksha, Nirvāṇa or Brahman according to the different phraseology.

The Term

The term Upanishad occurs very sparingly in the early texts. Some of the late Saṁhitās use it in the verb form.[4] The Brāhmaṇa and Āraṇyaka texts use it as a noun, conveying the sense of secret and mystical teachings.[5] In the Upanishads themselves the word is used quite frequently. It retains the earlier sense of secret rule or doctrine and also denotes a class

of writing. The earlier sense is conveyed by the passages where after proclaiming a doctrine the teacher says 'this is Upanishad, it should be taught only to one's eldest son or a dear pupil.'[6] The latter sense is apparent when Upanishads are mentioned alongside other classes of Vedic learning, "Ṛgveda, Sāmaveda, Yajurveda, Atharvaveda, Itihāsa Purāṇa, Vidyā, Upanishad, Śloka, Anuvyākhyāna and Vyākhyāna."[7] Both these meanings of the term convulge when the pupil requests the teacher—"Tell me the Upanishad" and the teacher replies—"I have said the Upanishad to you."[8]

Many short passages in the Brāhmaṇas and the Āraṇyakas begin with the words—"This then is the Upanishad of the Saṁhitā."[9] The Taittirīya Upanishad professes to explain the Upanishad of the Saṁhitā.[10] The Muṇḍaka presents a beautiful metaphor when it equates the Upanishadic knowledge with a powerful weapon, a bow, which enables one to successfully hit the target of Brahman with the arrow of Ātman.[11] Another metaphor presents the Upanishads as the milch cows and Arjuna as the calf for whose benefit Kṛshṇa brought forth the Gītā—the milk enjoyed by the learned.[12]

The term Upanishad was used in a different sense in the later texts. The Āśvalāyana Gṛhya Sūtra teaches certain rites connected with conception and procreation of male offspring as the Upanishad.[13] Kauṭilya includes all kinds of magic rites for the purposes of arson, assassination, blinding, etc. in the Upanishadic chapter.[14] Vātsyāyana gives secret prescriptions relating to sexual intercourse and to cosmetics under the heading of Upanishad.[15]

It seems from all these uses of the word that *Upanishad* signified a sense of secret or mysterious doctrine, more than a philosophical treatise and that this was due mainly to the fact that these secret doctrines were imparted only to a select audience.

The Meaning

The word Upanishad is derived from the root *sad*, to sit, to which *Upa* and *ni* prefixes have been added. The word is taken to mean 'to approach someone and sit down next to him', and knowing the ancient system of education it might

safely be assumed that the pupil approached the teacher and if accepted, sat down near his feet to learn. Śaṅkara derives the word from the root *sad*, to loosen, to teach or to destroy. If this derivation is accepted, Upanishad means that knowledge by which ignorance is loosened or destroyed.

It is to be noted in this connection that the words *Upasad*[16] and *Nishad*[17] were already in use at the time of the Upanishads. That both these prefixes were utilized simultaneously shows a significant development. The word *Upasad* occurs in the Ṛgveda, the Atharvaveda, the Taittirīya Saṁhitā and the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa.[18] It meant to sit near, to approach respectfully, to revere or worship. It is also the name of a particular fire in the Śatapatha.[19] The word *Nishad* meant to sit idly, especially near the altar during the performance of a sacrifice in the Ṛgveda and the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa.[20] In early historical times a derivation of this word was used for the place where a person spent the rainy season. The term *Nishadya*, which occurs often in Pali literature, meant 'the act of sitting' or 'a seat'.[21] The Seventh Pillar Edict of Aśoka refers to the creation of *niṁsiḍhayā*, while describing other works of public welfare—like planting shady fruit trees along the roadside and wells every mile or so. Scholars are of the opinion that niṁsiḍhayā either meant ladder or wayside inns.[22] Aśoka's grandson Daśaratha had donated caves to the Ājīvikās for staying in the rainy season.[23] Further, the Hāthīgumphā inscription of Khāravela uses the word *nisīdiyā* for the temporary residence of some Jaina Arhat.[24] The word *nishad* might have stood for the seat of some learned man, even at the time of the Brāhmaṇas and the Upanishads. The composite term Upanishad might be taken to mean to approach respectfully the seat of some learned scholar and sit near him.

The Texts

The number of the texts going under the generic name of the Upanishads varies from 108 to more than 200. The Muktikā Upanishad enumerates 112 Upanishads[25] and the Vedic Padānukrama Kośa lists about 200.[26] Not all of these deserve to be called Vedānta, for they were not composed at

the tail end of the Vedic age. Some of them are very late compositions as is apparent from such names as the Allopanishad. These works, although falling under the same category of literature, do not represent the true thinking of the Upanishadic age, much less the people and their practices.

From among this heterogeneous mass there is a small number which forms an integral part of a body of Vedic writings. By adding a few of a more uncertain derivation, but of a character quite as antique, we obtain at the most twelve or thirteen texts which might be called true representatives of the age. They are—

1. Aitareya
2. Kaushītaki
3. Chāndogya
4. Kena
5. Bṛhadāraṇyaka
6. Īśa
7. Taittirīya
8. Kaṭha
9. Śvetāśvatara
10. Maitrāyaṇī
11. Praśna
12. Muṇḍaka
13. Māṇḍūkya.

Out of these thirteen some doubts attach to the Kaushītaki, Maitrāyaṇī and Māṇḍūkya. Some scholars add a fourteenth—the Mahānārāyaṇa Upanishad—to this list.

The Kaushītaki Upanishad does not have a commentary on it by the Ādi Śaṅkarācārya, but it was definitely known to him as an ancient Upanishadic text. He quotes from it in his commentary on the Brahma Sūtras. Internal evidence also gives it an early date. Two of the stories in the Kaushītaki are common to the Chāndogya and the Bṛhadāraṇyaka. The thought contents also reveal the same kind of philosophical ideas.

The Māṇḍūkya is a very short Upanishad, consisting of only twelve verses with no cultural data to its credit. Its importance lies merely in the fact that it shows a logical deve-

lopment of the theory of sleep and the subconscious mind first propounded in the Ajātaśatru-Gārgya episode of the Bṛhadāraṇyaka and the Kaushītaki Upanishads. Śaṅkarācārya has written a commentary on the Māṇḍūkya, yet he describes it not as an Upanishad but as a literary composition containing the essence of Vedānta. Scholars are of the belief that it is a very late composition, and some credit the teacher of Gauḍapāda with its authorship.

The Maitrāyaṇī again poses a problem for the scholars. Ranade,[27] Deussen[28] and Winternitz[29] include it in their lists of ancient Vedic Upanishads. Max Müller has translated it along with the other twelve in his Sacred Books of the East Series. Pande[30] has raised serious objections to its being treated as an early pre-Buddhistic Upanishad. He has pointed out that it draws clearly and literally from older Upanishads like the Chāndogya, the Bṛhadāraṇyaka, the Kaṭha and the Īśa. But so do other Upanishads like the Muṇḍaka and the Śvetāśvatara. Futhermore, it is noted that the text shows a developed knowledge of Sāṁkhya and Yoga, using a large number of technical terms never or rarely found in the older Upanishads, and that its verses are generally reminiscent of the Mahābhārata. This objection can also be overruled by a closer scrutiny. The later strata of the ancient Upanishads already showed the development of philosophical thinking on the same lines as Sāṁkhya and Yoga and many of the terms referred to by Pande were on the brink of making their appearance.

Aitareya Upanishad

The Aitareya Upanishad belongs to the Ṛgveda and is found incorporated within the Āraṇyaka of that name. The Āraṇyaka consists of five books in all and the Upanishad forms chapters IV to VI of Book II. There are other diminutive passages in the Āraṇyaka which claim to be the Upanishads of the Saṁhitā. The Aitareya Brāhmaṇa and Āraṇyaka are supposed to have been written by Mahīdāsa Aitareya, who has also bestowed his name upon them but the Upanishad part is attributed to purely human authors like Āśvalāyana and Śaunaka. Śaṅkara and Sāyaṇa have written commentaries on it and glossaries by Ānandajñāna, Nārāyaṇendra and Ānandatīrtha are also found. It was translated

into Persian at the time of Dara Shikoh and was published in the Bibliotheca Indica by Röer and Rajendralal Mitra. It has been translated into English, Hindi, Bengali and Kannada, among other languages.

The Upanishad starts on a cosmogonical note. In the beginning Ātma alone was there. It created the worlds and their presiding deities. They were pervaded by hunger and thirst and were allotted their respective places in the human body so that they could appease hunger and thirst by partaking of food. Food could only be grasped by the *Apāna* breath. Ātman then entered the human body and made the heart its abode. The second book contains the ideas of Vāmadeva—that when a man is conceived that is his first birth, when he is born, that is his second birth, and when after reaching a ripe old age, he leaves for the other world that is his third birth. The third book contains a specific definition of Ātman and Brahman.

The Upanishad does not offer much cultural information, but on the basis of the thought-content, the presentation, as also its position of being embedded *in situ*, it is considered to be a fairly old Upanishad.

Kaushītaki Upanishad

The Kaushītaki also belongs to the Ṛgveda. A Śākhā of that name is mentioned but is not found. The Kaushītaki Brāhmaṇa comprising thirty chapters and the Kaushītaki Āraṇyaka consisting of fifteen chapters are available. The Upanishad forms chapters III to VI of the Āraṇyaka. Śaṅkarācārya's commentary on this Upanishad is not found but he gives extracts from it in his commentary on the Brahma Sūtras. Śaṅkarānanda has written his *Dīpikā* on it. It was translated into Persian and was published in the Bibliotheca Indica by Cowell. A German translation following a complete critical edition of the Kaushītaki Brāhmaṇa, Āraṇyaka, and Upanishad was published by Frenz.

The first chapter gives details about the twofold path of the dead—one, which leads to the moon and back to the earth in the form of insects or beasts or men. The second, *Devayāna*, leads the departed through the worlds of gods to the Brahmaloka. The second chapter shows mixed contents. It meditates on the life breath as Brahman and at the same

time also describes some rituals and sacraments. The third chapter establishes the life breath as the *summum bonum* of all existence. It shows that all the creatures rest on intelligence, which, in its turn, rests on the life breath. The fourth chapter gives the story of King Ajātaśatru of Kāśī and the proud brāhmaṇa Bālāki in which the famous Sleep Doctrine is in a lesser developed form than in the Bṛhadāraṇyaka and the Māṇḍūkya.

The Upanishad is rich in cultural material. The *dramatis personae* include Indra, Pratardana, Citra Gāṅgyāyani, Uddālaka Āruṇi and his son Śvetaketu, Ajātaśatru Kāśya and Gārgya Bālāki. Many places of interest are mentioned. The Upanishad is generally taken to be an early one.

Chāndogya Upanishad

The Chāndogya Upanishad which belongs to the Kauthuma Śākhā of the Sāmaveda, shares the honour of being the oldest and the bulkiest text with the Bṛhadāraṇyaka. The Brāhmaṇa of this school comprises forty chapters. The first 25 chapters are called the Pañcaviṁśa Brāhmaṇa and the next five chapters the Shaḍviṁśa Brāhmaṇa. The next two chapters are known as the Mantra Brāhmaṇa and the last eight the Chāndogya Upanishad. The last two mentioned together form the text of the Chāndogya Brāhmaṇa. The Chāndogya Upanishad has commentary by Śaṅkarācārya and a glossary by Ānandagiri. It was translated into Persian by Dara Shikoh and his pundits and into French by Duperron. It appeared in the Bibliotheca Indica with a translation by Rajendralal Mitra. It has also been translated into German by Hamm, into Italian by Papesso and into Russian by Syrkin. Morgenroth published a dissertation on it from the Jena University and Syrkin and Yutaka Yuda some papers in Russian and Japanese, respectively.

It has eight capters and, apart from a few verses here and there, is entirely in prose. The first two chapters continue the glorification of the Udgītha. The third chapter shows Āditya as the honey of the gods which has been brought forward by the Vedas and the Brahma-knowledge. It meditates on man as sacrifice and Āditya as Brahman. The fourth chapter narrates the stories of Jānaśruti-Raikva and of Satyakāma

Jābāla as a student of Brahma-knowledge at his teacher's place, and later as a teacher himself. The fifth chapter starts with a fable proclaiming the superiority of life breath over other senses and goes on to tell the tale of Pravāhaṇa and Śvetaketu which shows a developed version of the Citra story of the Kaushītaki. The identity of Vaiśvānara Ātman is made clear in the Aśvapati episode. The sixth chapter gives a consolidated lecture on all the current trends of philosophy as delivered to Śvetaketu by his father Uddālaka Āruṇi. The famous formula "*Tattvamasi Śvetaketo*!" (That thou art, O' Śvetaketu!), showing the ultimate unity of the individual with the world soul, also occurs in this chapter. The seventh chapter gives progressive definitions of the Brahman as rendered to Nārada by Sanatkumāra. The last chapter describes the importance of the knowledge of Ātman and Brahman and shows how the Asuras came to accept the wrong doctrine as the truth about Ātman and how Indra by his perseverance ultimately attained the true Brahma-knowledge.

The Upanishad is a veritable storehouse of invaluable information about the cultural life of the times.

Kena Upanishad

The Kena Upanishad is attached to the Talavakāra recension of the Sāmaveda. The Jaiminīya Saṁhitā and the Jaiminīya Talavakāra Brāhmaṇa have been published. The ninth chapter of this Brāhmaṇa goes under the name Kena Upanishad, derived from its first word. Commentaries by Śaṅkara and Nārāyaṇa and a glossary by Ānandajñāna are available on it. It was included in the translations of Dara Shikoh and Duperron. English translation by Sri Aurobindo along with Bengali and Marathi translations are among the more notables. Sengaku Mayeda has published articles on Śaṅkara's authorship of the Pādabhāshya and the Vākyabhāshya and on Nārāyaṇa's authorship of the Kenopanishad-Dīpikā in Japanese.

The Upanishad has four sections, the first two in verse and the other two in prose. Deussen, for this reason, takes it as belonging to the transitional phase between the ancient prose Upanishads and the later metrical ones. It shows the gods puzzled by an unknown *Yaksha*. They were told by

Umā Haimavatī that it was Brahman. The first half of the Upanishad establishes the identity of the Brahman as that which is the ear of the ear, the mind of the mind, the speech of the speech, the breath of the breath, and the eye of the eye.

Īśa Upanishad

The Īśa Upanishad, named after the first word, forms an integral part of the Mādhyandinī Saṁhitā of the Śukla Yajurveda. Being directly attached to the Saṁhitā, it might claim a very early date but the Śukla Yajurveda Saṁhitās are considered to be later than the Kṛshṇa. Therefore, this Upanishad should be treated as late. The style in which Brahman is described in the eighteen verses also hints at a later date. Max Müller has pointed out that the Yajurveda is the liturgical Veda par excellence whereas the Upanishads in a way negate the Karmakāṇḍa, by emphasizing penance, austerity and meditation. Therefore, the inclusion of an Upanishad within close proximity of the Yajurveda Saṁhitā shows a discrepancy. Be that as it may, there is no doubt as to the importance of this Upanishad as a source of philosophy.

The Upanishad has been translated into English, Hindi, Bengali, Gujarati, Marathi and Telugu. Among the notable commentaries mention might be made of the commentaries of Sri Aurobindo and Vinoba Bhave.

It consists of only eighteen verses, some of which are addressed to Pūshan, some to Agni and some to Kratu or sacrifice. But the rest of the verses describe Brahman in a well-developed manner. The ethical code of conduct is spelled out.

Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upanishad

The Bṛhadāraṇyaka is one of the oldest and largest Upanishads. The Śukla Yajurveda, to which it belongs, has two available recensions—the Mādhyandina and the Kāṇva. Both have their own Śatapatha Brāhmaṇas, showing minor variations of the text. The Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upanishad forms the last six chapters of the fourteenth Kāṇḍa of the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa. Śaṅkara's commentary and Ānandatīrtha's glossary are found. It has been translated into French by Senart and into Russian by Syrkin.

The Upanishad is divided into six chapters and three Kāṇḍas. Each pair of chapters is followed by a genealogical list of teachers, who trace their line from Brahman or Āditya. This is significant, since the Śukla Yajurveda is said to have been revealed to Yājñavalkya by Āditya. Yājñavalkya figures as a very important person in the third and fourth chapters. The first chapter describes the universe as a cosmic horse and proceeds to give a detailed account of the creation of the world by Brahman. The importance of the life-breath is established. Prajāpati is also credited with the creation of the worlds, the creatures and food. A triad of *nāma*, *rūpa* and *karma* is also mentioned.

The second chapter starts with the story of Ajātaśatru and Gārgya; brings out the twofold character of Brahman, the formed and the formless; explains the nature of Ātman and Brahman in the Yājñavalkya-Maitreyī dialogue; describes the Madhu-Vidyā and ends with the line of tradition.

The third chapter is set in the court of Janaka Vaideha and gives a detailed account of the discussion held between the brāhmaṇas of Kuru-Pañcāla and Yājñavalkya, synthesising all the Upanishadic thinking. The fourth chapter also consists of Yājñavalkya's lectures on philosophy delivered to Janaka and to Maitreyī. Part of the discourses shows a very developed phraseology and even quotes verses from the Īśa and the Kaṭha. The line of teachers follows.

The fifth chapter opens with Prajāpati's advice to his threefold offspring and goes on to identify Brahman with Satya. Diminutive passages on varied topics follow it. The sixth chapter again relates the fable of the quarrelling senses and the victory of the life-breath. Pravāhaṇa's views of life after death occur next. Ritualistic formulas are recorded and a matrilineal list of the teachers concludes the Upanishad.

The text abounds in rich cultural material. The dialogues bring long-forgotten names within close contact and we have a glimpse of the relationship between the king and the sages, between husband and wife, between the ritualistic priests and the thinkers. The kingdoms of Kāśī and Videha seem to be gaining popularity as centres of new philosophical thinking.

Taittirīya Upanishad

The Taittirīya Upanishad belongs to the Taittirīya Saṁhitā of the Kṛshṇa Yajurveda. There are Brāhmaṇa and Āraṇyaka texts of that name as well. The Taittirīya Āraṇyaka has ten chapters, of which chapters VII, VIII and IX are known as the Taittirīya Upanishad and the tenth chapter as the Mahānārāyaṇa Upanishad. But the latter is a late supplementary work showing definite signs of being a sectarian Upanishad. Śaṅkarācārya has commented on the Taittirīya Upanishad and Sāyaṇa on the Brāhmaṇa and Āraṇyaka as well. Sureśvara's Vārttika and Ānandagiri's Ṭīkā on Śāṅkara Bhāshya are also found. Father Goncalo Fernandez had translated the Bhṛgu Vallī into Portuguese in the Hindu Ceremonial of 1616.

The first chapter, Śiksha Vallī, deals with the art of pronunciation and the relationship between the teacher and the taught, followed by contemplations on Brahman and Om exhortation to the departing students. The second chapter, Brahmānanda Vallī, outlines progressive definitions of Brahman as food, as life-breath, as bliss and traces various forms of bliss. The third chapter, Bhṛgu Vallī, contains the dialogue between Bhṛgu and Varuṇa in which again Brahman is known by progressive stages as food, breath, mind, intelligence and bliss. The last part illumines the importance of food.

Kaṭha Upanishad

The Kaṭha Upanishad is easily one of the most popular Upanishads. The legend of Yama-Naciketas is a byword for Upanishadic thought. It is attributed to the Kaṭha Śākhā of the Kṛshṇa Yajurveda, although another opinion holds it as an Atharvanic Upanishad. It has two chapters with three Vallis each and is entirely in verse. Śaṅkara has written a commentary and Gopālayogin and Ānandagiri have written glossaries on it. It has been translated into English, Hindi, Bengali, Kannada and Tamil. Two scholars have published articles on whether there is Buddhist influence on the Kaṭha or not. An article has also been published on the Kaṭhopanishat Śāṅkara-bhāshya in Japanese.

The story goes that Vājaśravas Gautama, while performing a sacrifice, was giving away barren and useless cows to the

priests as fees. Seeing this, his son Naciketas was aggrieved and asked him "for whom shall you give me?" The father irritably said "For Yama". The son took him literally and went willingly to the abode of Yama. He stayed there for three nights without food or drink as Yama was away from home. In consequence Yama offered him three boons—one that his father be happy to see him again; second the fire-sacrifice through which people gain heaven; and third the truth about life and death. The philosophy that is expounded by Yama is no longer in course of development. The phraseology is well-formed and many images are reminiscent of the Bhagavadgītā. It seems to come before the Muṇḍaka, the Śvetāśvatara and the Maitrāyaṇī and later than the others.

Śvetāśvatara Upanishad

The Śvetāśvatara is handed down as one of the thirty-three Upanishads of the Taittirīya school of the Kṛshṇa Yajurveda, though it could have been connected with the unavailable Śvetāśvatara Saṁhitā. It has been commented upon by Śaṅkara, Vijñānātman and Śaṅkarānanda among others. A translation in English by Rājagopalachari and in German by Wilhelm Rau are noteworthy.

There are six chapters composed in verse. The first chapter analyses the causes of birth and death, pleasure and pain and brings about the point that knowledge and austerity make one realize the self. The second chapter commences with a prayer to Savitri and goes on to detail the practice and profit of Yoga. The third chapter establishes the superiority of Rudra Śiva over all others by identifying him with Brahman. The fourth chapter keeps up the description of the universal and individual souls.

Many verses are common to the Īśa, the Kaṭha and the Muṇḍaka. The phraseology is very well-developed and the descriptions of the individual soul and the universal soul, details about Yoga and Rudra's almost sectarian character have led scholars to set a later date to this Upanishad.

Maitrāyaṇī Upanishad

The Maitrī or Maitrāyaṇī Upanishad belongs to the Maitrāyaṇī Śākhā of the Black Yajurveda, though some texts

attribute it to the Sāmaveda. Śaṅkara has not written any commentary on it.

The Upanishad opens in a dramatic manner—Bṛhadratha, a king of the Ikshvāku line, having renounced his kingdom, goes to the forest for meditation. The sage Śākāyanya arrives on the scene and instructs him as to the Brahma-Vidyā in order to liberate him from the birth-cycle; the same vidyā that was given to him by the revered Maitrī and to the Vālikhilyas by Prajāpati. The dialogue is supposed to have continued till the end of the seventh chapter but most people are of the opinion that the older part of the Upanishad ends with the fourth chapter and the later three chapters were added considerably later.

The general picture of society emerging from the Maitrāyaṇī Upanishad seems to be later than that of the Bṛhadāraṇyaka or the Chāndogya. The thought-contents also, as shown by several scholars, seem to be of a later date. This, then, can be taken as the lower terminal of the Upanishadic culture. There are scholarly discussions on whether or not this Upanishad comes before the Buddha.

Praśna Upanishad

The Praśna Upanishad belongs to the Paippalāda Śākhā of the Atharva Veda. The Brāhmaṇa, Āraṇyaka and Kalpa Sūtras of this Śākhā have not been found. The Upanishad has commentary by Śaṅkara and by Ānandagiri. It is written mostly in prose with occasional verses.

The sage Pippalāda is visited by six other learned men, all desirous of more knowledge. Their questions are recorded in the six sections and also give the Upanishad its name. These questions concern the creation of the universe, its basis, the origin of life-breath, the sleep doctrine, the superiority of Om and the person with sixteen parts. The answers show a well-developed Upanishadic philosophy.

The layout shows a pre-meditated plan and not the spontaneity of the earlier texts. Another pointer to its lateness is that the dialogue is entirely between the brāhmaṇas. This, according to Deussen, is a sure sign that the brāhmaṇas had assimilated the new *guhya* doctrines of the kshatriyas and were preaching them as their own.

Two names among the questioners are worthy of attention: Kausalya and Vaidarbhi. Kosala, along with Kāśī and Videha, seems to have been the hub of the Upanishadic culture but Vidarbha is the only word in the Upanishads referring to the region south of the Vindhyas.

Muṇḍaka Upanishad

The Muṇḍaka Upanishad is related to the Śaunaka Śākhā of the Atharva Veda but its relation to any Brāhmaṇa or Āraṇyaka is not established. It has a commentary by Śaṅkara and glossary by Ānandajñāna. There are three chapters with two sections each, written in verse. It shows clear influence of the Kaṭha and the Śvetāśvatara Upanishads. All the other Upanishads also declare that sacrifices are insufficient for attaining permanent bliss but this is the only Upanishad which clearly states that sacrifices are like frail boats, unable to carry one ashore.

The word Muṇḍaka, derived from the root *Muṇḍ*, 'to shave', might have meant that the Upanishad was addressed to the shaved ones, the Saṁnyāsins, or that it was inspired by the shavelings, the Buddhist monks, or that it shaved away ignorance. The first chapter distinguishes between the true knowledge and the false and emphasizes the permanent nature of the bliss obtainable as a result of austerity and penance and not sacrifices. The second chapter describes Brahman as the universal soul from which this universe finds expression and which can be realized with the true Upanishadic knowledge and meditation on Om. The third chapter shows that the World Soul can be realized by the individual and that this realization is the ultimate aim of all religious practices.

Māṇḍūkya Upanishad

The Māṇḍūkya Upanishad consists of twelve verses and is believed to be an Atharvanic Upanishad. It identifies the Om with the fourfold Brahman and equates the three syllables a-u-m with the three states of waking, dream and dreamless sleep. Gauḍapāda (Śaṅkarācārya's teacher's teacher) wrote his famous Kārikā on it and Śaṅkara has commented on the Upanishad as well as the Kārikā. Scholars have pointed out that the Upanishad presents the very ideas preached by the

Advaita philosophy and that it was probably written by a teacher, once or twice removed from Gauḍapāda.

The Upanishad is of no help whatsoever regarding cultural life. It only shows a logical development of the Sleep Doctrine of Ajātaśatru as described in the Kaushītaki and the Bṛhadāraṇyaka.

The Date

As has been mentioned earlier,[31] it is difficult to fix a date for the composition of the Upanishads. The period overlaps the composition of the later Saṁhitās and the Brāhmaṇas on one hand, and of the Sūtras on the other. The entire Vedic canon has been put by various scholars into a very far-stretching period; from 6000 B.C. as the starting point to 200 B.C. as the closing date. Tilak based his dates on astronomical calculations. The vernal equinox fell on Orion instead of Pleiades in 4500 B.C., therefore some Vedic texts go back to 6000 B.C.[32] Jacobi attributed very high antiquity to the Ṛgveda on the basis of the custom of sighting the polar star by the bride and the groom during the marriage ceremony. He believed that the star had to be a shining one. A bright star was the polar star in the year 2780 B.C. and as this custom was not mentioned in the Marriage Hymn of the Ṛgveda, Jacobi inferred that the Ṛgvedic period lies before the third millennium B.C.[33] B.V. Kamesvara Aiyar also tried to use astronomical data to prove that the Brāhmaṇas were written from 2300 B.C. to 2000 B.C., and the Ṛgveda in c. 4500 B.C.[34]

Macdonell suggested a time bracket of 1500 B.C. to 200 B.C. for the whole of Vedic literature, dividing it into three strata—

(i) the four Vedas,
(ii) the Brāhmaṇas with their accompanying Āraṇyakas and Upanishads, and
(iii) the Sūtras.[35]

Max Müller thought that to venture to give a final judgment on the relative age of the Upanishads was as difficult as that of the four gospels. The germs of the Upanishadic

doctrine go back to the Mantra period, i.e. 1000 B.C. to 800 B.C. but the bulk of the ancient Upanishads was composed before 600 B.C. and was anterior to the rise of Buddhism.[36]

Winternitz confessed ignorance about the astronomical evidence but favoured Tilak's and Jacobi's date in preference to those suggested by Max Müller, Macdonell and Keith. The beginning of the Vedic literature, according to him, was nearer 2500 or 2000 B.C. than to 1500 or 1200 B.C. He put all the ancient Upanishads with the exception of the Maitrāyaṇī and the Māṇḍūkya in the pre-Buddha period.[37]

Ranade fixed the Upanishadic age as somewhere between 1200 B.C. and 600 B.C., with the later Upanishads of the above canon devetailed into that next period of Indian Thought, when Buddhism was germinating, when Sāṁkhya and Yoga were being systemised and when the Bhagavadgītā was being composed.[38]

Radhakrishnan took most of the principal Upanishads as belonging to 800 B.C. to 600 B.C.[39]

Considering all the available data at hand, it seems most likely that the bulk of the Upanishads was composed somewhere between 800 B.C. to 600 B.C. Even if some portions of Śvetāśvatara or Maitrāyaṇī were composed after the death of Buddha, the life reflected in them continued to be Upanishadic in character.

Relative Chronology

Taking into account the language, style, thought-content, successive elaboration of detail and inter-quotations, a relative chronology of the thirteen Upanishads has been attempted by various scholars.

Deussen[40] in an attempt for a rough chronology gave four successive periods—

1. The ancient prose Upanishads—Bṛhadāraṇyaka, Chāndogya, Taittirīya, Aitareya, Kaushītaki and Kena (transitional).
2. The metrical Upanishads—Kena (transitional), Kaṭha, Īśa, Śvetāśvatara and Muṇḍaka.
3. The later-prose—Praśna, Maitrī, Māṇḍūkya.
4. Later Atharva Upanishads—all the rest.

Winternitz[41] followed almost on the same lines, the only exception being Kena, which was not broken up into two different phases, and Praśna which was placed in the second group instead of the first.

Phase I : the earliest, pre-Buddha and pre-Pāṇini Upanishads, mainly in prose—Aitareya, Bṛhadāraṇyaka, Chāndogya, Taittirīya, Kaushītaki and Kena.

Phase II : those written in verse, later than the first phase but still probably pre-Buddha—Kaṭha, Śvetāśvatara, Īśa, Muṇḍaka and Praśna.

Phase III : the post-Buddhistic ones—Maitrī and Māṇḍūkya.

Ranade[42] did not agree with the time scheme. He placed them all before Buddha. He divided the thirteen Upanishads into five groups out of which the first three groups comprised the first period of Deussen.

Group I : Bṛhadāraṇyaka, Chāndogya
Group II : Īśa, Kena
Group III : Aitareya, Taittirīya, Kaushītaki
Group IV : Kaṭha, Muṇḍaka, Śvetāśvatara
Group V : Praśna, Māṇḍūkya, Maitrāyaṇī.

Radhakrishnan showed three main time divisions on the basis of the development of philosophical ideas—

1. The early pre-Buddhistic, non-sectarian Upanishads written in prose, including Aitareya, Kaushītaki, Taittirīya, Chāndogya, Bṛhadāraṇyaka and partly Kena.
2. Kena (1-13) and Bṛhadāraṇyaka (IV 8-21) forming the transitional phase between the first phase and the second, which included Kaṭha and Māṇḍūkya.
3. The rear was brought up by Maitrī and Śvetāśvatara which were decidedly later as they show elements of Sāṁkhya and Yoga and even some technical terms of the orthodox systems.[43]

The study of the cultural material corroborates the same general pattern. It seems that Chāndogya and Bṛhadāraṇyaka represent the earliest phase, closely followed by Kaushītaki, Aitareya, Taittirīya and Kena. The next phase in development seems to be represented by Īśa, Kaṭha, Muṇḍaka, and Māṇḍūkya. Śvetāśvatara with its almost sectarian veneration of Rudra and elaboration of Sāṁkhya and Yoga philosophy and Maitrāyaṇī with its talk of fraudulent sādhus and scripture-studying Śūdras as unworthy of heaven and the highly developed *triguṇa* theory bring up the rear. They were the last Upanishads to be composed before the tide turned to favour the heterodox sects and the élite busied themselves with the study of Buddhism and Jainism.

Work Done So Far

The Upanishads, forming a part of the great oral tradition, were handed down from generation to generation. Their study was restricted within the close confines of the Vedic Śākhās, accessible only to the three higher castes of society. Śūdras and women were denied the right soon after their composition.[44] The situation would have remained exactly as it was, had it not been for the exemplary industry of the Moghul prince Dara Shikoh. He had learnt Sanskrit and studied the ancient texts. Much impressed by the profound thinking of the Upanishads, he caused them to be translated into Persian, so that more people could benefit by them. Persian was the language of the aristocracy and the élite at the time. Several pundits were brought to the court of Delhi from Benares and together they translated fifty Upanishads into Persian in the year 1656-57. This translation, in its turn, was translated into Latin and French by Anquetil Duperron. The Latin translation was published from Strassberg in 1801-1802. A French translation of the Latin *Oupnek'het* by Lanjuinais appeared in 1832 and a German one in 1882. One of the first attempts in English was made by Röer in 1853. He rendered nine Upanishads into English. But the first systematic attempt was that of Max Müller who translated twelve Upanishads into two volumes in 1879 and 1884.

Thus launched the Upanishads never looked back. They

were translated into English, German, French, Italian, Dutch, Polish, Japanese and even Russian. They have traversed almost the entire globe, as is evident from publications coming out from Buenos Aires to Tokyo. Even at home, they have been translated into Hindi, Bengali, Gujrati, Marathi, Kannada, Telugu and Tamil. Their contribution to the culture and philosophy of India has been immense and people from all walks of life have acknowledged their indebtedness to these expositions. Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Dayananda Sarasvati, Vivekananda, Mahatma Gandhi, Sri Aurobindo, C. Rajagopalachari and S. Radhakrishnan are among the few who owed their thinking to the Upanishads and to whom the Upanishads owe their popularity. Schopenhauer used to keep an edition of the *Oupnek'het* by his side and is known to have said "It has been the solace of my life, it will be the solace of my death."[45] Max Müller professed that his real love for Sanskrit literature was first kindled by the Upanishads.[46]

The most authentic publications of the Upanishadic texts have been the Nirnaya Sagar Press, Bombay Edition and Bibliotheca Indica, Calcutta. Radhakrishnan's *Principal Upanishads* is the most handy edition, for it includes the texts in Roman characters and a running English translation with critical notes.

The most important commentary on the Upanishads is by Śaṅkarācārya, on which glossaries have been written by Ānandagiri, Ānandajñāna, etc. There have been scores of commentaries, some of them with very high philosophical value like those by Rāmānuja, Madhva, etc. but they generally show a sectarian or ideological bias.

Among the English translations, mention must be made of Hume's *Thirteen Principal Upanishads* published in 1921 from Oxford. The Ramakrishna Mission has published almost all the principal Upanishads with their English translations by several scholars. Sri Aurobindo's and Rajagopalachari's translations are also popular, both in India and abroad.

Noteworthy German translations include *Das Oupnekhat*, Dresden, 1882; *Sechzig Upanishads des Veda* by Deussen, Leipzig, 1897 and Böhtlingk's translations published from St. Petersberg and Leipzig in 1889-90. Marcault's French rendering of the nine Upanishads was published in 1905 from Paris,

and Clara Streubel's into Dutch in 1908 from Amsterdam. Filippani-Ronconi translated thirteen Upanishads into Italian, which were published in three volumes of the *Enciclopedia di autori classici* in 1960-61. A second revised edition came out in 1968. Lugowski published fragments from some Upanishads rendered into Polish in the *Studia Filozoficzne*, Warsaw, 1970.

The Upanishads Complete: *The Doctrine of Brahma*, a work in nine volumes was published by Sekai Bunko Kanko-Kwai in 1922-24, in which 116 Upanishads were translated into Japanese by twenty-seven different scholars.

A. Ya. Syrkin published a Russian translation of the Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upanishad in 1964 and of the Chāndogya Upanishad in 1965 from Nauka, Moscow. The other eleven were published as volume XVI of *Monuments of Oriental Letters* from Nauka, Moscow, in 1967.

The Concordance to the Principal Upanishads and Bhagavad-gita by Jacob and the *Vaidika Padānukrama Kośa*: *Upanishads* by Viśva Bandhu Śāstri are of immense help to the study of the Upanishads.

Ranade's *Constructive Survey of Upanishadic Philosophy* and Hume's *Thirteen Principal Upanishads* give exhaustive bibliographies which can be brought up to date with the help of Dandekar's *Vedic Bibliography* published in three volumes from Poona.

The secondary books on the Upanishads have been classified under three heads by Ranade: the histories of literature, religion and philosophy. The inclusion of books on histories of culture about completes the picture. The histories of literature written by Macdonell, Max Müller, Keith, Weber and Winternitz are pioneer works. The histories of religion and philosophy include the works of Hopkins, Barth, Bloomfield, Hillebrandt, Oldenberg, Dasgupta, Radhakrishnan, Strauss and Frauwallner, to mention only a few. There have been works devoted entirely to the philosophy of the Upanishads. Among these are the works of Gough, Deussen, Ranade and Keith.

The more ambitious works on the cultural history of India include *The Vedic Age*, *The Cambridge History of India*, *The Comprehensive History of India*, *An Advanced History of India*,

A History of Civilization in Ancient India based on Sanskrit literature and *The Cultural Heritage of India.* There are also books like *Vedic India* by Louis Renou, *Rigvedic India* by A.C. Das and *Uttara Vaidika Samāja evam Saṁskṛti* by V.B. Rao.

Some of these works treat the entire Vedic age as a single cultural unit, drawing freely and indiscriminately from the Ṛgveda down to the Sūtras. Taking into account that some nine centuries intervened between the two, it is hardly justifiable to treat them as such. There were too many social, economical, political and religio-philosophical changes to be ignored.

Most of the cultural histories divide the Vedic period into two phases—the early or Ṛgvedic and the later Vedic. The later Vedic period consists of the Yajurveda Saṁhitās, the Atharvaveda, the Brāhmaṇas with their accompanying Āraṇyakas and Upanishads and sometimes even the Sūtras. This time span is again too long-drawn and the culture represented therein is too diversified to be treated thus summarily.

The histories of literature show that there is a vast deal of difference between the language of the Saṁhitās and that of the Upanishads, the former had already become archaic and obsolete by the time of the Upanishads. Linguistically, the Upanishads are more akin to classical Sanskrit than to the Vedic. The histories of philosophy also give the Upanishads their due and treat them as a separate class of writing. It is pointed out that the Saṁhitās and the Brāhmaṇas raised many questions but merely hinted at the answers. It was only in the Upanishads that all those questions were answered in a rational way.

It is, therefore, in fitness of things that the Upanishads should be treated not only as a different class of literature and a different phase of Indian philosophy but also as a different era of culture.

Attempts have already been made to complete the picture and fill in all the lacunae. V.W. Karambelkar's *The Atharvavedic Civilization* published from Nagpur (1959) and Jogiraj Basu's *India of the Age of the Brāhmaṇas*, Calcutta (1969) are cases in point. The Gṛhya and Śrauta Sūtras have warranted similar studies. Ram Gopal wrote *India of the Vedic Kalpasūtras* and V.M. Apte wrote *Social and Religious Life in the Gṛhyasūtras.* But the Upanishads had so far not merited such

close scrutiny. They were occasionally referred to in passing by scholars, writing on the later Vedic Age in general. They were mixed portraits, as they drew from the entire range of Vedic literature and not merely from the Upanishads.

The present study is a step in this direction. It is a painstaking effort to compile the entire geographical, social, economical, political, religious and philosophical material scattered in the Upanishads and present it in a historical perspective. This gives the Upanishads an opportunity to present their own cultural picture without a lot of mixing up with the later Saṁhitās and the Brāhmaṇas and makes it easier for the historian to compare and contrast it with the preceding and succeeding period without having to refer to the Upanishads themselves.

APPENDIX A

List of 112 Upanishads published by the Nirnaya Sagar Press, Bombay, 1917:

1. Īśa
2. Kena
3. Kaṭha
4. Praśna
5. Muṇḍaka
6. Māṇḍūkya
7. Taittirīya
8. Aitareya
9. Chāndogya
10. Bṛhadāraṇyaka
11. Śvetāśvatara
12. Kaushītaki
13. Maitreyī
14. Kaivalya
15. Jābāla
16. Brahmabindu
17. Haṁsa
18. Āruṇika
19. Garbha
20. Nārāyaṇa
21. Nārāyaṇa
22. Paramahaṁsa
23. Brahma
24. Amṛtanāda
25. Atharvaśiras
26. Atharvaśikhā
27. Maitrāyaṇī
28. Bṛhajjābāla
29. Nṛsiṁha-pūrva-tāpinī
30. Nṛsiṁha-uttara-tāpinī
31. Kālāgnirudra
32. Subāla
33. Kshurikā
34. Yāntrika
35. Sarvasāra
36. Nirālamba
37. Śukarahasya
38. Vajra Sūcika

39. Tejobindu
40. Nādabindu
41. Dhyānabindu
42. Brahma vidyā
43. Yogatattva
44. Ātmabodha
45. Nārada-parivrājaka
46. Triśikhi brāhmaṇa
47. Sītā
48. Yoga-cūḍāmaṇi
49. Nirvāṇa
50. Maṇḍala-brāhmaṇa
51. Dakshiṇā-mūrti
52. Śarabha
53. Skanda
54. Tripādvibhuti-mahānārāyaṇa
55. Advayatāraka
56. Rāma-rahasya
57. Rāma-purva-tāpinī
58. Rāma-uttara-tāpinī
59. Vāsudeva
60. Mudgala
61. Śāṇḍilya
62. Piṅgala
63. Bhikshuka
64. Mahā
65. Śārīraka
66. Yoga-śikhā
67. Turīyātīta
68. Saṁnyāsa
69. Paramahaṁsa-parivrājaka
70. Akshamāla
71. Avyakta
72. Ekākshara
73. Annapūrṇā
74. Sūrya
75. Akshi
76. Adhyātma
77. Kuṇḍikā
78. Sāvitrī
79. Ātman
80. Pāśupata-brahma
81. Para-brahma
82. Avadhūta
83. Tripurā-tāpinī
84. Devī
85. Tripurā
86. Kaṭha-rudra
87. Bhāvanā
88. Rudra-rahasya
89. Yoga-kuṇḍalī
90. Bhasma-jābāla
91. Rudrāksha-jābāla
92. Gaṇapati
93. Jābāla-darśana
94. Tāra-sāra
95. Mahāvākya
96. Pañca-brahma
97. Prāṇāgnihotra
98. Gopāla-pūrva-tāpinī
99. Gopāla-uttara-tāpinī
100. Kṛshṇa
101. Yājñavalkya
102. Varāha
103. Śāṭhyāyanīya
104. Hayagrīva
105. Dattātreya
106. Garuḍa
107. Kali-saṁtaraṇa
108. Jābālī
109. Saubhāgya-lakshmī
110. Sarasvatī-rahasya
111. Bahvṛca
112. Muktikā.

APPENDIX B

List of 200 Upanishads, published by Viśva Bandhu Shastri from Lahore in 1945:

1. Atharvaśikhā
2. Akshamālikā
3. Adhi
4. Advaya-tāraka
5. Advaita
6. Advaita-bhāvanā
7. Adhyātma
8. Amṛtanāda
9. Annapūrṇā
10. Amṛta bindu
11. Aruṇa
12. Allāh
13. Avadhūta (1)
14. Avadhūta (2)
15. Avyakta
16. Atharvaśiras
17. Ātma (1)
18. Ātma (2)
19. Ācamana
20. Ātharvana-dvitīya
21. Ātma-pūjā
22. Ātma-bodha
23. Āruṇika
24. Ārsheya
25. Āśrama
26. Itihāsa
27. Īśa
28. Ūrdhva-puṇḍra
29. Ekākshara
30. Aitareya
31. Kaṭha
32. Kaṭha-rudra
33. Kali-saṁtaraṇa
34. Kaṭha-śruti
35. Kātyāyana
36. Kāmarāja-kīlitoddhāra
37. Kālī-medhā-dīkshita
38. Kālāgni-rudra
39. Kālikā
40. Kuṇḍikā
41. Kṛshṇa
42. Kṛshṇa-purushottama
43. Kena
44. Kaivalya
45. Kaushītaki-Brāhmaṇa
46. Kaula (1)
47. Kaula (2)
48. Kshurikā
49. Gaṇapati
50. Garuḍa
51. Garbha
52. Gāyatrī
53. Gāyatrī-rahasya
54. Guhya-kālī
55. Guhya-shoḍhānyasa
56. Gopāla-pūrva-tāpinī
57. Gopala-uttara-tāpinī
58. Gopī-candana
59. Caturveda
60. Cakra
61. Cākshusha
62. Cūlika
63. Chāndogya
64. Chāgaleya
65. Jābāla
66. Jābāla-darśana
67. Jābāli
68. Tāra-sāra
69. Tārā
70. Turīya

71. Turīyātīta
72. Tulasī
73. Tejobindu
74. Taittirīya
75. Tripura
76. Tripurātāpinī
77. Triśikhi-brāhmaṇa
78. Tripādvibhūti-mahānārāyaṇa
79. Dakshiṇā-mūrti
80. Dattātreya
81. Devī
82. Dvaya
83. Dhyānabindu
84. Nārāyaṇa
85. Nārāyaṇa-pūrva-tāpinī
86. Nārāyaṇa-uttara-tāpinī
87. Nādabindu
88. Nārada-parivrājaka
89. Nārada
90. Nirālamba
91. Nirukta
92. Nirvāṇa
93. Nīlarudra
94. Nṛsiṁha-pūrva-tāpinī
95. Nṛsiṁha-uttara-tāpinī
96. Nṛsiṁha-shaṭcakra
97. Pañca-brahma
98. Paramahaṁsa-parivrājaka
99. Paramahaṁsa
100. Parabrahma
101. Pāramātmika
102. Pārāyaṇa
103. Pāśupata-brahma
104. Piṇḍa
105. Piṇḍa-brahmāṇḍa
106. Pītāmbara
107. Piṅgala
108. Praśna
109. Praṇava (1)
110. Praṇava (2)
111. Prāṇāgnihotra
112. Bahvṛca
113. Bāshkala
114. Bilva
115. Bṛhadāraṇyaka
116. Bṛhajjābāla
117. Brahma
118. Brahmabindu
119. Brahma vidyā
120. Bhasma-jābāla
121. Bhava-saṁtāraṇa
122. Bhāvanā
123. Bhikshuka
124. Maṭhāmrāya
125. Maṇḍala-brāhmaṇa
126. Mahā-nārāyaṇa
127. Mantrikā
128. Mahāvākya
129. Mahā
130. Māṇḍukya
131. Muktikā
132. Muṇḍaka
133. Mudgala
134. Mṛtyu-lāṅgūla
135. Maitrāyaṇī
136. Maitrī
137. Maitreyī
138. Yajñopavīta
139. Yājñavalkya
140. Yoga-kuṇḍalī
141. Yoga-cūḍamaṇi
142. Yoga-tattva (1)
143. Yoga-tattva (2)
144. Yogarāja
145. Yoga-śikhā
146. Rāja-śyāmalā-rahasya
147. Rāma-pūrva-tāpinī
148. Rāma-uttara-tāpinī

149. Rādhā
150. Rāma-rahasya
151. Rudra
152. Rudra-Jābāla
153. Rudra-hṛdaya
154. Lāṅgūla
155. Liṅga
156. Vana-durgā
157. Vaṭuka
158. Varada-pūrva-tāpinī
159. Varada-uttara-tāpinī
160. Vajra-pañjara
161. Varāha
162. Vajra-sūcikā
163. Vāsudeva
164. Viśrāma
165. Vidyā-tāraka
166. Śarabha
167. Śāṭyāyanīya
168. Śāṇḍilya
169. Śārīraka
170. Śiva
171. Śiva-saṁkalpa (1)
172. Śiva-saṁkalpa (2)
173. Śuka-rahasya
174. Śaunaka
175. Śyāmala
176. Śvetāśvatara
177. Shoḍha
178. Sadānanda
179. Saṁkarshaṇa
180. Saṁnyāsa (1)
181. Saṁnyāsa (2)
182. Sarasvatī-rahasya
183. Sarva-sāra
184. Sāma-rahasya
185. Sāvitrī
186. Siddhānta-sāra
187. Siddhānta-śikhā
188. Sītā
189. Sudarśana
190. Subāla
191. Sumukhi
192. Sūrya
193. Surya-tāpinī
194. Saubhagya-lakshmī
195. Skanda
196. Sva-saṁvedya
197. Hayagrīva
198. Haṁsa
199. Haṁsa-shoḍha
200. Heramba

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5. Śat. Br. X.3.5.12; XII.2.2.23 etc.; Gopatha Br. I.1.21; 1.38, etc.; Ait. Āraṇ. III.1.1; III. 2.5 etc.; Taitt. Āraṇ. VII.3.1; VIII.9.1; IX.10.6; X.6.1, etc.
6. Chānd. I.13.4; III.11.3; Bṛhad. II.1.20; etc.
7. Bṛhad. II.4.10; IV.1.2; Mait. VI.32.
8. Kena IV.7— उपनिषदं भो ब्रूहि-इति। उक्ता उपनिषत् ब्राह्मीं वा व त उपनिषदम् अब्रूम-इति।
9. Ait. Āraṇ. III.1.1; 2.5; Śāṅkh. Āraṇ. VII.2; etc.—अथातः संहिताया उपनिषत्।

10. Taitt. I.3.1 अथा तत् संहिताया उपनिषदं व्याख्यास्यामः ।
11. Muṇḍ. II.2.3 धनुर्गृहीत्वा औपनिषदम्' ' '
12. Gītā Mahātmya—
    सर्वोपनिषदो गावो दोग्धा गोपालनन्दनः ।
    पार्थो वत्सः सुधीर्भोक्ता दुग्धं गीतामृतं महत् ।।
13. Āśvalāyana Gṛhya Sūtra I.13.1.
14. Arthaśāstra XIV.
15. Kāma Sūtra VIII.
16. Ait. Br. III.18; I.25; III.45; Taitt. Br. II.2.2.6; Śat. Br. IX. 5.1.22; XII.1.3.6; III.4.4.1.
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22. VII Pillar Edict of Aśoka, line 14; *S.I.*, p. 66. Sircar renders it निःश्लिष्टका-सोपानानि and Buhler निषिदिया (नि + सद्) ।
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26. Appendix B.
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44. Mait. VII, 8; शूद्रशिष्याः, शूद्राश्च शास्त्र विद्वांसः those who are the disciples of śūdras and who, though śūdras, are learned in the scriptures are called thieves and unworthy of heaven. The Smṛtis forbade śūdras and women the right to study the Vedas.
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CHAPTER II

Vedic Antecedents

Before going into the details of the cultural data provided by the Upanishads, it is desirable to make a note of the backdrop as represented by the Saṁhitās, the Brāhmaṇas, and the Āraṇyakas. Although the Vedic canon follows the general pattern of Saṁhitā-Brāhmaṇa-Āraṇyaka-Upanishad, there are many throwbacks and overlappings,[1] which make it difficult to say that the Upanishadic period always followed those of the Saṁhitās and the Brāhmaṇas. In view of the fact that several centuries intervene between the earliest phase of the Ṛk Saṁhitā and the latest of the principal Upanishads, we are justified in taking them as different eras of Vedic Culture.

The Ṛgveda mentions the region of the Sapta-Sindhu—seven rivers—quite often.[2] Scholars are not unanimous in their identification of these seven rivers. Some believe them to have been the Oxus, Kubha, Gomal, etc. of the present-day Afghanistan-Pakistan region, while others take them to be the five rivers constituting Punjab, viz. Jhelum, Chenab, Ravi, Sutlej and Beas with Indus and Sarasvatī making the sixth and seventh. Bhargava is of the opinion that both these identifications are correct, since the Ṛgvedic hymns were composed while the Aryans were on the move. Some of them were composed when the Aryans had not yet entered the portals of the new country and some were composed in the midst of Punjab, the land of the five rivers.[3] By the time of the late hymns of the Ṛgveda the Aryans thought of the Sarasvatī (the lost river of Rajasthan) as the most important

one—*nadītamā*[4] and the land between Sarasvatī and Dṛshadvatī as the cradle of Ṛgvedic culture. The text mentions Yamunā and Sarayū but sparingly.

In later Vedic times, i.e. the time of the later Saṁhitās and the Brāhmaṇas, the Aryans had pushed eastwards along the river Ganga. The Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa narrates the story of the ceremonial crossing of Sadānīrā and the inhabitation of Videha.[5] The events of the Mahābhārata must have taken place about this time and important centres like Paricakrā, Āsandīvant, Kauśāmbī and Kāmpilya have found mention in the Śatapatha.[6] But it is to be noted that the region south of the Ganga is not mentioned in these texts, causing scholars to infer that the eastward progress of the Aryans was along the foothills of the Himalayas rather than the banks of the Ganga. An isolated passage in the Aitareya Āraṇyaka mentions three tribes or groups of tribes: the Vyases, the Vaṅgāvagadhas and the Cerapādas as having moved eastwards.[7] Of these only Cerapādas were settled in the region south of the Vindhyas in historical times. Scholars are of the opinion that either the passage is a later addition or that the Cerapādas mentioned therein resided somewhere in the north-eastern region from where they later shifted southwards.[8]

The Dānastutis of the Ṛgveda record the tribes inhabiting the region between the rivers Sarasvatī and Dṛshadvatī.[9] An account of the *Dāśarājña* war, in which Sudās of the Bharatas conquered a confederacy of ten tribes, mentions the Purus and their allies the Yadus, Turvaśas, Anus and Druhyus.[10] Neither the Purus nor the Bharatas are heard of in later literature. They seem to have amalgamated with the Kurus, the heroes of the Mahābhārata. They are mentioned together with the Pañcālas, the Vaśas and the Uśīnaras as being settled in the Madhyadeśa.[11] The Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa shows the Sṛñjayas sharing a priest with the Kurus, signifying their close alliance.[12]

The Vedic tribes were generally governed by a king. It has been discussed by scholars that the need for a leader arose in times of conflict, be it fear from outside invasion or internal strife. Therefore, the king was primarily a leader in war and did not have religious or judicial functions.[13] Hereditary kingship was becoming popular but at the same time in general people had enough say in the matter to oust

an unworthy ruler or to re-elect an exiled one.[14] The tribal assemblies, known as the twin daughters of Prajāpati, applied a check on the autocracy of the king and served the judicial purpose.[15]

By the time of the later Saṁhitās the tribes consolidated into kingdoms with permanent capitals and a rudimentary administrative system. The tribal assemblies—Sabhā and Samiti—were losing their grip over the autocracy of the king. He was fast becoming all-powerful, surrounded by a host of officials, personal servants and much pomp and show. What the assemblies were losing in power was gained by the *Ratnins*, 'the jewel-bearers' of the king whose strength made the kingdom vigorous.[16] Their loyalties were ascertained through special ceremonies at the time of the consecration.[17] Many sacrifices were prescribed for the rising royal pretensions, among them were the Rājasūya, the Vājapeya and the Aśvamedha.

From the way the gods keep on turning to people like Prajāpati, Manu or Bṛhaspati for settling their disputes in the Brāhmaṇa texts,[18] it might be inferred that family feuds and disputes over land and property were settled at a local basis by the head of the family or the village alderman.

Even before the Indo-Iranian and Indo-Aryan branches separated from the parent body, Indo-European society was divided into three classes—the warrior, the priest and the commoner.[19] The Ṛgveda shows this class distinction and also a colour consciousness. The word used for the different strata of society was *Varṇa*, which literally means colour. The Aryans were conscious of the fact that they were fair-skinned, as compared to the dark *dāsas* or *dasyus*. Great stress was laid on the purity of blood. But with the intermingling of races and blending of cultures the despised dāsas came to be accepted by the Aryans as a fourth stratum in their society. Gradually the class and colour distinctions became consolidated into the caste-division. The Purusha Sūkta showed the four *Varṇas* as emanating from the dismembered body of the Primeval Being, who was sacrificed by the gods at the beginning of the world.[20] The Brāhmaṇa texts often show the brāhmaṇas and kshatriyas in close cahoots, trying to outwit the commoners.[21] The śūdras, born from the feet of Purusha, were destined to serve others.

The families were patriarchal with the brothers and their children living together under the head of the family. The birth of a son was considered to be an occasion for rejoicing, whereas daughters were thought of as sources of misery.[22] The father had absolute control over his children. He could sell them or blind them if he was so inclined, but normally the relationship was one of warm affection.[23] The daughters were free to choose their husbands but they honoured their father's choice too.[24] Both bride-price and dowry were known.[25] Marriage with the dāsa Varṇa, one's father or brother was prohibited. There was also ban on marriage between agnates and cognates. The Śatapatha allows marriage after three or four generations on either side.[26] Polygamy was popular, the king is specially reported to have had four wives at one time.[27] The wife participated in the sacrifices. She ruled over the brothers, unmarried sisters and parents of the husband along with the servants, cattle, etc.[28]

The Vedic people depended on a mixed pastoral and agrarian economy. The Aryans had entered India as cattle-rearing nomads. At the time of the Ṛgveda they were still in a semi-nomadic state because the word *Yava* seems to denote almost the entire range of cultivated grains known to them.[29] Cattle served as a kind of currency besides supplying most part of the dietary.[30] Horse was used for riding as well as for drawing chariots. There are some beautiful passages in the Ṛgveda describing the swiftness and grace of a horse in the most affectionate terms.[31] Sheep and goat provided wool, which was their chief textile.[32]

Agriculture was known but was considered rather plebeian in the Ṛgveda. Words for ploughing and reaping occur and a passage has been doubtfully interpreted to hint at some kind of an irrigation system.[33] Later Vedic literature shows a large range of crops including rice.[34] The ritualistic details in the Brāhmaṇas show a variety of ways to make use of the cultivated grains.[35] Scholars have also found some hints of irrigation and manure[36] therein.

The trades and crafts were becoming specialized.[37] There were metal-workers, goldsmiths and jewellers, basket makers, weavers, dyers, rope-makers, carpenters, bow-makers, chariot-makers, potters and various domestic servants. Acrobats,

fortune-tellers, dancers and people who played various musical instruments are alluded to. Usurers and merchants are also mentioned.

The Aryans knew about mining and smelting.[38] Gold, copper and bronze are mentioned in the Ṛgveda.[39] The Yajurveda further mentions a black *ayas*.[40] The word *ayas*, though used for iron in later times, was used loosely for copper, bronze and iron at the time. But, by qualifying it as *Kṛshṇāyas*, iron seems to have been intended. With the presence of iron in the early levels at Kauśāmbī, Ataranjikhera and Pandu Rajar Dhibi, the use of iron by the Vedic Aryans does not seem very improbable.

Vedic literature does not show any traces of writing or coined money. The term *nishka* seems to have meant an ornament of some kind and not currency.[41]

The religion of the Vedic people as represented by the Ṛgveda consisted of the worship of the *devas*, the shining ones. There were gods belonging to three different spheres—terrestrial, aerial and celestial, led by Agni, Indra or Vāyu and Sūrya, respectively.[42] The father heaven, Dyaus (akin to Greek Zeus and Latin *Ju*-piter), was a vague figure. Pṛthivī, Aditi and Ushas were among the very few goddesses. Indra was relatively the most important figure and Sūrya and Agni were the most tangible ones. Varuṇa was the king, the guardian of the cosmic order. Yama was the first mortal and ruled the kingdom of the dead. There were others—Vishṇu, Maruts, Aśvins, Rudra, who were only minor godheads.

All these gods were shown in a human form with distinctive physical attributes and individual fads and foibles. But they were all partial to the oblations offered to them in the sacrificial fire and granted the desired boons to the mortals when thus propitiated. This trait of making offerings in the fire was common in almost all primitive religions, but nowhere did it develop into such an elaborate craft as it did at the hands of the Vedic priests.

The sacrifices can be divided into two categories—

(1) The Gṛhya sacrifices where the sacrificer himself made oblations in the domestic fires daily, periodi-

cally or on special occasions like birth, marriage or death in the family.

(2) The Śrauta sacrifices were more complex and long-drawn, attended by a host of priests, divisible under four heads—the invoker—*Hotā*, the singer—*Udgātā*, the actual performer—*Adhvaryu* and the superintendent—*Brahmā*. The sacrificer had little to do, except to reward them all with rich fees—*dakshiṇā*. The minutest details were attended to by specialists. The sacrificer was invested with divine powers during the sacrificial ceremony but the priests were mightier still with the power to make or mar the sacrifice with one wrongly uttered syllable. The means had become greater than the end and even the adored ones. Sacrifice was venerated as the highest god and was identified with Prajāpati and Vishṇu. The Yajurveda was the 'liturgical Veda par excellence' and the Brāhmaṇa texts were handbooks of priestcraft.

Glimpses of the popular religion might be had from the Atharvaveda. It records the sympathetic magic, formulae to appease or exorcise the spirits, to bless friends or to destroy the enemies. The primitive ideas have been modified by the compilers, yet it is a far cry from the priestly sacrificial cultus.

Yāska, in his Nirukta, has shown that the Vedic hymns are of three kinds—Paroksha Kṛta, Pratyaksha Kṛta and Ādhyātmika. Among these the first two are numerous but the third variety is limited.[43] Nonetheless, it was this third category, the Ādhyātmika or spiritual hymns which paved the way for the later development of monotheistic and ultimately monistic philosophy.

Vedic literature is full of descriptions about innumerable gods, invoked individually and also collectively, which gave rise to the opinion that the Vedic religion was polytheistic. A peculiar trait was that whichever god was being eulogised was held supreme. This suggests a kind of monotheistic tendency. Max Müller analysed this phenomenon in detail and introduced new terms for it, viz. Henotheism and Kathenotheism. The former has been accepted and popularised by scholars.

Some of the Vedic hymns have philosophical contents like

the Aditi,[44] Purusha,[45] Hiraṇyagarbha,[46] Nāsadīya,[47] Skambha[48] and Ucchishṭa.[49] Their study shows the development of monotheistic ideas. For example, Aditi is described as the sky and the heaven; the mother, father and son; all the gods and the five people. Whatever is born or will be born is Aditi alone.[50] Similarly, Purusha is shown as having a thousand heads, a thousand eyes and a thousand feet. He covered the earth on every side and spread ten fingers' breadth beyond.[51] Hiraṇyagarbha is said to have risen in the beginning, he was the overlord of all creatures, he upheld the earth and the sky. He was the god of gods and none beside him.[52] The Nāsadīya Sūkta negates the existence of everything, for, it says neither non-being nor being existed in the beginning. There was neither air nor sky; neither death nor immortality; neither night nor day. The one breathed by its inherent force and there was nothing beyond it.[53] The Skambha Sūkta already hinted at the all-pervading nature of Brahman and its identification with Ātman. Brahman was known as Skambha. He was the basis and the cause of the entire universe. He was also the cause of Brahman, therefore was known as the Jyesṭha Brahman. He was called Ātman.[54]

The word *Ucchisṭa* means the left-over. Whatever is left-over after negating the visible universe, Ucchisṭa. All things were based on it: Nāmarūpa depended on it, Veda-Purāṇa emerged from it and Prāṇa, Apāna, Cakshu, Śrotra, Akshiti and Kshiti were born from it.[55]

All this goes to show that attempts were being made to prove that all the gods were one and the same or rather that there was only one God who divided himself manifold into one form or the other. As the oft-quoted verse puts it: He is called Indra, Mitra, Varuṇa, Agni and the fine-feathered Garutmān. It is only one being whom people call by divergent names as Agni, Yama and Mātariśvan.[56] The thinkers tried to fix its form as Aditi or Purusha or Hiraṇyagarbha, or even as the formless principles of non-being—Asat, Skambha or Ucchishṭa. This was later crystallized in the Upanishadic concept of Brahman.

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36. Zimmer, *Altindisches Leben*, 236; also *Vedic Index*, SV *Khanitrima* and *Karīsha*.
37. Vāj. Saṁ. XXX.12; Taitt. Br.

III.4.9. The list of Purusha Medha victims gives a wide variety of occupations.

38. *Vedic Index*, SV *dhmātṛ*, blower or smelter.
39. RV I.43.5; III.34.9; etc. for Hiraṇya; I.57.3; 163.9; IV.2.17 etc. for Ayas.
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CHAPTER III

Geography

The Upanishads, being philosophical books, are principally concerned with such questions: From where does this material world emerge? Who is responsible for its creation? Where does a man go after death? We are more likely to get conjectures regarding the path the soul takes after its departure from earth, than the definite answers to such basic questions as who were the authors of any particular Upanishad? Where did they come from? Where were they settled and what was the nature of surroundings in which they lived? The answers are merely hinted at in the Upanishads. The references are matter-of-fact and devoid of any embellishments. The later trend of high exaggeration had not yet made its mark. It was customary, in the inscriptions and literature of later-day India, to make small holdings into large empires stretching from sea to sea.[1] But, whatever references are available in the Upanishads, do reflect the exact geographical extent of the Upanishad-producing people.

Physical Features

The land which cradled the sages and saw the composition of the Upanishads is described as being "girdled by the waters and full of treasures."[2] There are various theories regarding the creation of earth, the most geographically sound one being that recorded by the Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upanishad—

"In the beginning there was nothing . . . then water was

produced, . . . and what was there as the froth of the water, that was hardened and became the earth."[3]

It bears a close resemblance to the creation of earth as told in the Old Testament of the Bible.

Sea

The Bṛhadāraṇyaka mentions two seas—*pūrva* and *apara*, i.e., the eastern and the western.[4] These have been interpreted as the Bay of Bengal and the Arabian sea, respectively. They are proclaimed to be the birth-place of a gold vessel and a silver vessel. But to conclude on this basis, that the Upanishadic people were mining their gold from somewhere in the vicinity of the eastern sea and silver from the western would be stretching things too far. The horse is also described as having the sea as its kin or stable and as its birth-place.[5] The Taittirīya Saṁhitā corroborates the viewpoint that the horse had its source in water.[6] But why and in what manner this alliance came about is not known.

Mountain

The Kaushītaki Upanishad mentions two ranges of mountains—the southern and the northern[7] which have been identified with the Vindhyas and the Himālayas, respectively. That the people knew the Himālayas, is proved beyond doubt by the reference to the white (-capped, snow-covered) mountains,[8] but whether or not they had ventured beyond the Vindhyas cannot be firmly established. All the tribes mentioned in the Brāhmaṇas and the Upanishads almost invariably belong to the region north of the Vindhyas. Still, some names like Vidarbha, Āndhra, Puṇḍra, Mūtiba, Pulinda, Śabara and Naishadha[9] imply the region south of the Vindhyas. These tribes had definitely settled towards the south of the Vindhyan range by the 3rd century B.C. as is apparent from the reference to them in the Aśokan inscriptions.[10] If they had already reached the area in the time of the Upanishads, it shows that the people had not only crossed the Vindhyas but also had knowledge of the people inhabiting that area. It might be mentioned, while on the subject, that if the events of the Rāmāyaṇa are to be taken at their face value, i.e. if Rāma had indeed been to Laṅkā, then it would mean the crossing of the

Vindhyan range, the Deccan plateau, the southern peninsula and the intervening channel. In this light, all the pre-conceived notions of the Upanishadic people being restricted within the frame of Āryāvarta and Madhyadeśa have to be revised. If Rāma, along with his monkeyarmy, could step over the Vindhyas, so could others. A passage in the Muṇḍaka Upanishad will need re-interpretation. It mentions seven seas, seven mountains and seven rivers.[11] The seven rivers were grouped together even at the time of the Ṛgveda and the region watered by the seven rivers was the core of the Ṛgvedic culture.[12] To identify the seven seas and the seven mountains, others besides 'the eastern and western seas' and 'the northern and southern mountains' are needed and they are to be found only in the area south of the Vindhyan range.

However, nothing can be said for sure, as the information at hand is very meagre.

River

The Bṛhadāraṇyaka tells us that there are some rivers flowing from the white mountains towards the east and others towards the west.[13] The Chāndogya also knows of rivers that run, the eastern towards the east and the western towards the west.[14] They go from sea to sea, i.e. the clouds lift up the water from the sea to the sky and send it back as rain to the sea. Besides these two refererences to the rivers, in general, hardly any river is mentioned by name in any of the principal Upanishads.

The Kaushītaki knows of a king Citra Gāṅgyāyani.[15] The name might have been derived from Ganga, although it is not at all common to the Vedic literature. The Ṛgveda mention Ganga only twice.[16] But the very fact that most of the incidents in the Upanishads take place in the principalities along the coast of the great river (Kāśī, Videha, Kosala and Pañcāla) seems to prove the existence of settlements on the bank of Ganga.

Forest

Forests or Araṇyas were becoming increasingly popular as the backdrop for the new philosophical thinking as is

evident from the genre of literature called the Āraṇyakas. Wandering ascetics frequenting these forests had grown by scores in the Upanishadic period but no names are mentioned. The only exception is the *Naimisha* forest, where a sacrifice is reported to have been performed.[17] Probably the forests and the forest-dwelling ascetics were ignored by the brahmanical texts because most of them disparaged the sacrifices. On the other hand, as Naimisha was the only forest where sacrifices were still being performed and the brāhmaṇa priests were still being venerated, it has found mention in the Chāndogya Upanishad. The Puranic tradition also shows Naimisha as the venue where thousands of Vedic seers congregated. The place has been identified as modern Nimsar, about 72 kilometres to the north-west of Lucknow.

The Scene

Geographical references in the Upanishads range from Gandhāra in the west to Videha in the east; from the white mountains in the north to the southern mountain and beyond.

Gandhāra

Gandhāra is the westernmost place alluded to in the Upanishads. The Chāndogya Upanishad describes a person being led away from the Gandhāras with his eyes bandaged and abandoned in a lonely place. He would shout towards the east or the north, or the south or the west—"I have been led here with my eyes bandaged." And if one released his bandage and told him, "in that direction are the Gandhāras, go in that direction", he, upon being thus informed and also capable of judgement, would reach the Gandhāras asking his way from village to village.[18]

This illustration was given by Uddālaka Āruṇī, reportedly a Kuru-Pañcāla brāhmaṇa, who had visited the Madras and the Kaikeyas. The allusion to the Gandhāras might be taken as the extent of the Upanishadic culture in the west.

The Gandhāras were settled in the districts of Peshawar and Rawalpindi with Taxila as their capital.[19] Zimmer believes that they were settled in the Vedic times on the south bank of the river Kubha up to its mouth in the Indus

and for some distance down the east side of the Indus itself.[20] Cunningham agrees with Strabo that Gandhiritis lay along the river Kophes between the Choaspes and the Indus.[21]

Even in the days of the Ṛk Saṁhitā, Gandharian ewes were famous for their soft wool.[22] The Atharva Veda mentions the Gandhāras alongside the Mūjavantas, Aṅgas and Magadhas.[23] Gandhāra formed a part of the Persian empire, a fact borne out by the Behistun inscription of Darius.[24] It is included in the list of the sixteen Mahājanapadas in the 6th century B.C. and still later, at the time of Aśoka, it formed a part of the Mauryan empire.[25]

Buddhist literature refers to Kashmir and Gandhāra together. King Pukkusāti of Gandhāra was a contemporary of Bimbisāra of Magadha. A Paushkarasādi is mentioned in the Śāṅkhyāyana Āraṇyaka.[26] The word seems to have been derived from Pushkalāvatī or vice-versa.

The Puranic tradition holds that the name Gandhāra is derived from one of the Druhyu kings. The Druhyus of Gandhāra had participated in the famous battle of ten kings, standing by the side of the Purus. In the Mahābhārata Śakuni of Gandhāra was an ally of the Kauravas. After the Bhārata war the area was occupied by the wild tribe of Nāgas, who rose to power and took possession of Takshaśilā. Their king Takshaka reached as far as Hastināpura and killed the weakened Puru ruler Parīkshita. The path from Kuru to Gandhāra was already trudged by Uddālaka in the time of the Upanishads.

The Rāmāyaṇa, however, tells us that the Gandhāra country was distributed between the two sons of Bhārata—Takshaśīla and Pushkala—who bestowed their names upon the two capitals—Takshaśilā and Pushkalāvatī.

Kekaya

The land of the Kekayas is known through their king Aśvapati Kaikeya.[27] It was a happy nation, moving the proud king to record for posterity that in his kingdom "there was no thief or drunkard, no miser, no man without an altar in his house, no ignorant person, no adulterer much less an adulteress." The Kekayas, although still performing sacrifices, were, nonetheless, also interested in the new upcoming

philosophy. The region had developed as a centre of learning and was visited by brāhmaṇas from the Kuru-Pañcāla country.

The tribe was settled in the north-west between the Indus and the Jhelum in later times,[28] and it is most probable that it was also the region of the Upanishadic Kekaya.

According to the Puranic tradition the Kekayas were descended from Anu, which fact is confirmed by the Anus occupying the same territory in the Ṛgveda where we later find the Kekayas. Uśīnara, the eighth descendant of Anu, established a kingdom on the eastern border of Punjab. His son Śibi conquered practically the entire Punjab and established four kingdoms through his sons, among whom were the Kekayas and Madrakas. This probably was nothing more than an attempt to connect all the known people of the area. The Mahābhārata shows the Kekayas as allies of the Kauravas. The Rāmāyaṇa shows their matrimonial alliance with Kosala.

Madra

The Madras are referred to in the Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upanishad.[29] Two of the Kuru-Pañcāla brāhmaṇas, attending the court of Janaka Vaideha, had visited the Madra country and had stayed with Patañcala Kāpya, one of them for learning the sacrificial cult. This implies that the Madra land was famous for sacrificial learning, so much so that even the Kuru-Pañcālas went there. This goes against the grain, because the Brāhmaṇa literature gives one to understand that it was the Kuru-Pañcāla land which was famous for chaste speech and elaborate rituals.[30] For a Kuru-Pañcāla person to be going to the Madras for the very thing he excelled in, seems to be out of the ordinary.

Another piece of information that comes out of the present passage is that the wife and the daughter of the said Patañcala Kāpya were possessed by two Gandharvas called Sudhanvan Aṅgiras and Kabandha Ātharvaṇa, respectively. These Gandharvas asked questions of bystanders and replied through the medium of the women. This type of primitive superstition regarding possession by spirits is quite unknown in the Upanishadic texts. It might be pointed out that the two Gandharvas were of the line of Atharva and Aṅgiras, the two words

denoting two different species of magic formulae: *atharvan* was "holy magic bringing happiness" and *aṅgiras* was "hostile or black magic".[31]

The country of the Madras corresponded roughly to modern Sialkot and its surrounding regions between the rivers Ravi and Chenab.[32] The capital Śākala has been identified with Sialkot. In later times, it was a great centre of trade, situated strategically in the middle of the trade route between India and Persia. The Madra people were divided into the Uttara-Madras and the Madras proper. Of the two, only the Uttara Madras appear in early Vedic literature. The Uttara Madras and the Uttara Kurus have been reported to be located beyond the Himalayas, somewhere in Kashmir.

The Mahābhārata shows the Madras as having matrimonial alliance with the royal house of Hastināpura. The princess Mādrī was married to Pāṇḍu and bore two of the five Pāṇḍavas. King Śalya had fought with the Pāṇḍavas in the Bhārata war.

Mahāvṛsha

The Chāndogya Upanishad knows of Jānaśruti Pautrāyaṇa, a king of the Mahāvṛshas, "who was a pious giver, bestowing much wealth upon the people and always keeping open house. He built places of refuge everywhere, wishing that people should everywhere eat his food."[33] The benevolence of the king seems to be much on the same lines as that of the Emperor Aśoka. He donated a village to his spiritual teacher Raikva and called it Raikva-parṇa after him. He also gave away his daughter in marriage to Raikva, although he was a mere *Sayugvan*, the man with a cart.[34]

The Jaiminīya Upanishad Brāhmaṇa knows of another king of the Mahāvṛshas, namely Hṛtsvāśaya.[35] The Atharva Veda mentions the Mahāvṛshas in company with the Mūjavantas and the Gandhāras which goes on to show that this tribe had also settled somewhere in the north-western region.[36] But the exact locale is doubtful.

Uśīnara

The Kaushītaki Upanishad mentions the Uśīnaras as having been visited by Gārgya Bālāki who had also been to the

Satvat-Matsyas, the Kuru-Pañcālas and the Kāśī-Videhas.[37] This emphasises the importance of these lands as centres of Upanishadic learning.

The Uśīnaras dwelt in the middle country, the *madhyamā dik*, along with the Vaśas and the Kuru-Pañcālas, according to the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa.[38] But the Gopatha Brāhmaṇa speaks of the Vaśas and Uśīnaras as united and regards them as northerners.[39]

The Puranic tradition tells us about a king Uśīnara belonging to the race of Anus, who had established a kingdom on the eastern border of the Punjab, which was divided among his five sons. Śibi, one of his sons, conquered practically the whole of the Punjab and established through his four sons the kingdoms of the Vṛshadarbhas, the Sauvīras, the Kekayas and the Madrakas.[40]

Satvat

Some versions of the text of the Kaushītaki Upanishad mention Satvat as one of the places where the proud brāhmaṇa Gārgya Bālāki had lived.[41]

The Aitareya Brāhmaṇa places the Satvats in the south, ruled by Bhoja kings.[42] The Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa refers to their defeat at the hands of King Bharata and indicates that they lived near Bharata's kingdom.[43]

Matsya

The Kaushītaki Upanishad associates the Matsyas with the Satvats.[44] It seems that the Matsya country was also gaining importance as a centre of learning.

The Matsyas lived in and around the region of Jaipur and Alwar. The Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa includes their king Dhvasan Dvaitavana in the ranks of those who had performed the horse-sacrifice.[45] The Matsya king Virāṭ was a powerful ally of the Pāṇḍavas in the Mahābhārata. They spent the thirteenth year of their exile in the Matsya country, and later Arjuna's son Abhimanyu was married to Virāṭ's daughter Uttarā.

Kuru

The Upanishads more often than not mention the Kurus

along with the Pañcālas.[46] The Kuru-Pañcāla brāhmaṇas are reported to have been the last word in chaste language and ritualistic excellence. The kings, wishful of performing sacrifices, always invited the Kuru-Pañcāla brāhmaṇas to take over the priestly offices. The Kurus were once hit by a hail-storm or a large-scale invasion of the locusts. The crop-failure caused drought conditions and reduced renowned scholars to begging. The king performed a sacrifice in order to give relief to the people. The performing priests were questioned about their respective deities but were unable to answer. Therefore, the questioner, Ushasti Cākrāyaṇa, walked away with the laurels.[47] An old *gāthā* quoted in the Chāndogya Upanishad tells how the Kurus were once saved by the mare (probably signifying the cavalry) in a battle.[48]

The Kurus inhabited the land between the rivers Sarasvatī and Dṛshadvatī, comprising modern Kurukshetra and Thaneswar, along with Sonepat, Amin, Karnal and Panipat.[49] Some people prefer to include Delhi and Meerut.[50] The capital was Āsandīvanta or Hastināpura.

The Ṛgvedic Purus and the Bharatas had amalgamated with the later-day Kurus. Later Vedic texts mention powerful kings like Bālhika Pratīpīya, Parīkshita, Janamejaya, etc. Parīkshita is the hero of a famous song of praise found in the Atharva Veda, which describes him as a universal king and his kingdom as flowing with milk and honey.[51] His son Janamejaya is credited with having gone conquering round the earth and performing a horse-sacrifice with Tura Kāvasheya as his purohita.[52]

Puranic tradition knows two Janamejaya Pārīkshitas—one a grandson of the king Kuru, who had performed an Aśvamedha, and another, the great-grandson of Arjuna who had performed a Sarpasatra. The first Janamejaya, then, ruled before the Bhārata war and the second some time after it. The Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upanishad asks where the extinct race of the Pārīkshitas has gone and replies that they have gone where the performers of the horse-sacrifices go.[53] This clearly alludes to the first Janamejaya also figuring in the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa.

The later Kuru kings were not as powerful. They sustained disasters and were finally obliged to flee the country.

Tradition holds it that a scion of the royal house went to Kauśāmbī and ruled over a powerful kingdom which survived till the rise of Buddhism.

Pañcāla

The Pañcālas also produced conquering kings who engaged in wars and alliances with the Kurus. But their chief claim to fame rests on their land being the home of great theologians and philosophers like the king Pravāhaṇa Jaivali and the sages Āruṇi and Śvetaketu.[54]

The Pañcālas were settled in the region comprising the districts of Bareilly, Budaun, Farrukhabad and the adjoining tracts.[55] They were divided into northern and southern parts with the river Bhagirathi as the demarcating line. At other times an eastern and western division is mentioned. The Mahābhārata tells us that the capital of the northern Pañcāla was Abicchatrā (modern Ramnagar in Bareilly district) while that of the southern Pañcāla was Kāmpilya (modern Kampil in Farrukhabad district). The Jātakas inform us that sometimes the northern Pañcāla was included in the Kuru kingdom and had its capital at Hastināpura, and sometimes it formed a part of the Kāmpilya rāshṭra.[56]

The name Pañcāla does not appear in the Ṛgveda but the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa tells us that their older name was Krivi[57] and that is found in the Ṛgveda. The Puranic tradition explains the name Pañcāla as having come from the five sons of Bhṛmyaśva who were jokingly nick-named capable (pañca-alam). The name suggests amalgamation of five tribes, and there have been conjectures as to which five. They sprang from the Krivis with whom the Sṛnjayas and the Turvaśas were associated. Anus and Druhyus, who disappeared at about this time, might have merged in them. The Pañcālas, along with the Pauravas and the Yādavas, played a very important role in the Bhārata war. The Pāṇḍavas had married the Pañcāla princess Draupadī, who inadvertently became the cause of the war, like Helen of Troy.

The close association of the Kuru-Pañcālas is apparent in the Upanishads, which almost invariably mention them together. It seems the Brāhmaṇa texts were perfected there. The Aitareya and Śatapatha Brāhmaṇas know of no less than

six Kuru-Pañcāla towns.[58] By the time of the Upanishads, the limelight had shifted to a more easterly region. The Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa had already crossed the Sadānīrā with Viḍegha Māthava and Gotama Rāhugaṇa.[59] The Aitareya Āraṇyaka knew of people who had gone east, the Vaṅgāvagadhas.[60]

Vatsa

The name of the Vatsas has been preserved in the genealogical tables of the Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upanishad.[61] Vatsanapāt Bābhrava reminds one of the Vatsas but it is Vātsya, a name common to all three lists, which proves the historicity of the Vatsas. The first two lists do not show any important connections but the third list shows Vātsya as a direct disciple of Kuśri. The alternate list mentions Kuśri as the teacher of Upaveśi, the father of Aruṇa and the grandfather of Uddālaka. This makes Vātsya a contemporary of Uddālaka's grandfather and proves the inhabitation of the Vatsa country even before the time of the Upanishads.

Vājaśravas	Yajñavacas Rājastambāyana
|	|
Kuśri	Kuśri
|	|
Upaveśi	Vātsya
|	|
Aruṇa	Śāṇḍilya
|	
Uddālaka	
|	
Yājñavalkya	

The country of the Vatsas was situated around Kauśāmbī, their capital, right from the days of the Brāhmaṇas down to the rise of Buddhism when Udayana was the king of Kauśāmbī.

The Brāhmaṇas show the Vaśas in company with the Uśīnaras and the Kuru-Pañcālas as living in the Madhyadeśa.[62] The Puranic tradition credits Vatsa, the son of Pratardana Daivodāsi of Kāśī, as having annexed the country around Kauśāmbī which came to be named after him. The Vatsas

sided with the Pāṇḍavas in the Bhārata war. The Mahābhārata speaks of the Kuru kingdom Hastināpura being washed away by the Ganga and of a wholesale migration to Kauśāmbī. The Buddhist canon tells us that Udayana of Kauśāmbī was contemporaneous with the Buddha, Pradyota of Avanti, Prasenajit of Kosala and Bimbisāra of Magadha. He is said to have been born on the same day as the Buddha.

Kosala

The land of Kosala is known to the Praśna Upanishad which mentions Hiraṇyanābha, a prince of Kosala[63] and also a theologian named Kausalya Āśvalāyana.[64] The Upanishad belongs to the Paippalāda recension of the Atharva Veda and the sage Pippalāda figures in it as a person to whom the others had gone for the answers to knotty problems of philosophy. By the law of averages, this school seems to have been situated in or about Kosala, for two out of the eight persons mentioned therein belong to Kosala.

The Kosala country was situated on the banks of the Sarayu and roughly corresponded to the Oudh province of the British Raj.[65] It was bounded by Sadānīrā (Gandak) on the east, the Pañcāla land on the west, Sarpikā or Syandikā (Sai) river on the south and the Nepal hills on the north. The kingdom was later divided into northern and southern Kosala, with Sarayu as the demarcating line. Śrāvastī and Ayodhyā were the capitals.

Kosala is first mentioned in the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa. The sacrificial fire was carried over the Kosala country by Videgha Māthava.[66] A king of Kosala is spoken of as having performed the Aśvamedha,[67] Tradition traces the line of the solar dynasty of the Ikshvākus on the throne of Kosala. The line included very illustrious persons like Triśaṅku, Hariścandra, Sagara, Bhagīratha, Raghu, Daśaratha and Rāma, the hero of the epic Rāmāyaṇa. Thus, probably king Aikshvāka Bṛhadratha, mentioned in the Maitrāyaṇī Upanishad,[68] was also a ruler of Kosala.

It was an important kingdom at the time of the Buddha. The Kosala king Prasenajit's sister was married to Bimbisāra of Magadha and his daughter to Bimbisāra's son Ajātaśatru. The possession of Kāśī was the bone of contention between

the two kingdoms. Prasenajit had married into the Śākya tribe of Kapilavastu. His son Vidūḍabha, when slighted by the Śākyas, cruelly massacred them.

Kāśī

Kāśī and Videha provide the main backdrop for the philosophical activities. The systematic exposition of Upanishadic philosophy saw the light of day in the courts of Ajātaśatru Kāśya and Janaka Vaideha. The Takshaśilās, Hastināpuras and Śrāvastīs have long since been buried in the earth, but ageless Kāśī, like the Upanishads themselves, "goes on forever".

The ancient city of Kāśī is stated to have been situated on the Varaṇāvatī river. The kingdom corresponds with the present-day Varanasi district. The Bṛhadāraṇyaka and the Kaushītaki Upanishads know of Ajātaśatru, the king of Kāśī who was a contemporary of Janaka Vaideha.[69] The Kaushītaki also mentions Pratardana Daivodāsi whom tradition establishes as a king of Kāśī.[70]

The Upanishads bracket Kāśī and Videha together but Buddhist sources hint at the close connection of Kāśī and Kosala. The Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa records the defeat of Kāśī at the hands of a Bhārata king.[71] Scholars are of the opinion that relations between Kāśī and Kuru-Pañcāla were anything but friendly.[72]

Kāśī was one of the sixteen important kingdoms in 6th century B.C. It was incorporated into the Kosalan kingdom for some time and into the Magadhan later. The two contended for the possession of Kāśī. A Jātaka story tells us that a group of seers, *ṛshi-gaṇa*, was not willing to go to Kāśī, since "the people there questioned too much".[73] This shows an awareness of the intellectual powers of the people of Kāśī.

Kāśī never rose to the dazzling heights of an empire, but on the other hand, it retained its glorious position as a centre of learning through rains and sunshine.

Videha

The Videhas have been immortalized by their king Janaka, whose fame led him to play the part of the father of Sītā.[74]

The kingdom of Videha was situated to the east of Kosala, with the river Sadānīrā (Gandak) serving as a boundary

between the two. It corresponds to the modern Tirhut, with its capital at Mithila. It was bounded on the east by Kauśikī and on the south by the Ganga.

It is fortunate that the story of the first colonization of Videha has been preserved in the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa. The story runs that Videgha Māthava, a chieftain, along with his priest Gotama Rāhugaṇa, carried the sacrificial fire eastward from the banks of the Sarasvatī, over Kosala, across the river Sadānīrā and finally settled at Videha, so named after the tribal name of Māthava.[75] The legend is important, being the only significant account of the process of colonization in a more or less contemporary source. In the progress of Agni, burning up the earth, we see not only the gradual eastward expansion of the Aryan fire cult, but also the clearing of jungle and waste by burning, as bands of migrating warrior peasants founded new settlements.

The king Janaka Vaideha was a great patron of hermits and wandering philosophers, although he paid fulsome fees to the Kuru-Pañcāla brāhmaṇas, invited to perform a sacrifice.[76]

Kosala, Kāśī and Videha are often found grouped together in the later Vedic literature. Probably they formed some sort of a confederacy, or they just presented a united front to the common enemies, the westerners. The Śāṅkhyāyana Śrauta Sūtra mentions Pāra Aṭnāra as the king of Kosala and Videha and Jala Jātukarṇya as the royal chaplain of Kosala, Videha and Kāśī.[77] The Upanishads also speak of Kāśī and Videha together.[78]

The Videhan monarchy fell shortly before the rise of Buddhism and its overthrow was followed by the rise of the Vajjian confederacy in the same vicinity. The Videhan torch of high philosophy was kept burning by their worthy successors who produced a great thinker in Mahāvīra and highly venerated another, the Buddha.

Aṅga-Magadha

The kingdoms of Aṅga and Magadha, though not directly mentioned in the Upanishads, were known to later Vedic literature. They served as symbols of the distant land in the Atharva Veda.[79] The Aitareya Āraṇyaka speaks of the *Vaṅgāvagadhas* as those who had gone away (from the centre

of sun or fire-worship).[80] The name indicates a composite tribe or a group of tribes like the Kuru-Pañcālas, consisting of Vaṅga (Bengal) and Magadha (South Bihar). The two, along with Aṅga (North Bihar), were included in the list of the sixteen Mahājanapadas. Aṅga developed as an important trading state and Magadha rose to empirical heights within a few centuries after the death of the Buddha.

Vidarbha

The Vidarbha country is alluded to through the names of Vaidarbhi Bhārgava[81] and of Vidarbhī Kauṇḍinya.[82] The two were probably inhabitants of the Vidarbha country. The latter name, that of Vidarbhī Kauṇḍinya, poses too much of a coincidence to be ignored. The Kaushītaki Upanishad knows of the southern mountains,[83] therefore, it is likely that the Upanishadic people had crossed the Vindhyan range and established the kingdom of Vidarbha with its capital at Kuṇḍinapura.

Vidarbha corresponded to modern Berar. Its capital has been identified with modern Kauṇḍinyapura on the bank of the Wardha in the Chandur *taluk* of Amraoti.

The Aitareya Brāhmaṇa knows of Bhīma, king of Vidarbha.[84] The Jaiminīya Upanishad Brāhmaṇa tells us that the Vidarbha kingdom had hounds that killed tigers.[85] The Puranic tradition refers to the king Vidarbha of the Yādavas, who, seeking peace with Sagara of Ayodhyā, gave him his daughter in marriage and founded a kingdom in the Deccan. The Vidarbha king supported the Kaurava forces in the Bhārata war. Their princess Rukmiṇi was betrothed to the Cedi king Śiśupāla but eloped with Kṛshṇa instead.

Flora

The Upanishads show a broad division of the flora into Oshadhi, Vanaspati and Vṛksha. The Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upanishad compares the oshadhi and vanaspati with the hair on the body of the cosmic horse,[86] but the same text at another place distinguishes between the two: the oshadhi is like the hair on the body of the man and the vanaspati like the hair on the head.[87] The Chāndogya indicates a distinc-

tion between the cultivated grains and the oshadhi-vanaspati in general.[88] Soma is said to have been the king of vanaspatis, in fact the term 'vanaspati' itself means the lord of the forest. The moon is identified with Soma and connected with the growth of all vegetation.

Soma is addressed as the king.[89] It was the principal offering in the Soma-sacrifices. Its identification has been a matter for conjecture. Some scholars believe that it was an extinct variety of the common Indian hemp, others that it was some other long-forgotten plant found only in the Himalayan foothills. It was already becoming scarce at the time of the Brāhmaṇas and the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa even suggests a substitute.[90]

The importance of trees in the life of the Vedic people is evident from the innumerable references. Most of the sacrificial paraphernalia was made from the wood of trees like Udumbara, Palāśa, Śālmalī, etc. The trees keep on cropping up in philosophical discourses for illustrating some obscure point. The simile of the inverted Aśvattha, with its root above and branches below, is very well known.[91] The same tree is again used to explain the existence of the World-soul and the individual-soul.[92] They even describe a tree in the Brahmaloka, "there is the lake Ara, the moments Yeshṭi, the river Vijara and the tree Ilya."[93]

Aśvattha[94] (Ficus religiosa) or the common *pipal* has had a long history. Its leaves have been depicted on pre-Harappan Nal and Kulli ware, as well as Harappan pottery. The Ṛgveda mentions it in connection with sacrifice. Its wood was used for kindling fire. The Brāhmaṇa texts proclaim it the overlord—*Samrāṭ* of all vegetation. It planted its roots in other trees and destroyed them, hence the name destroyer—*Vaibādha*. Aśvattha and Nyagrodha have been called the crested ones—Śikhaṇḍin.

Nyagrodha[95] (Ficus indica) 'growing downwards' is a tree remarkable for sending down its branches and fibres to take root and form new stems. The Ṛgveda does not mention it by name but seems to know it. The Atharva Veda and other later Vedic texts mention it frequently. The Aitareya Brāhmaṇa calls it the Kshatriya among plants.[96] Its fruit is used by Uddālaka Āruṇi to illustrate a philosophical point.[97]

Udumbara[98] (Ficus glomerata) was the most favourite tree of the priesthood since its wood was used for burning as fuel and churning sticks, and most of the implements from the ladle to the sacrificial post were made of the Udumbara wood. Its fruit was spoken of as being very sweet and at par with honey.

Pītu Dāru (Pinus deodora), *Palāśa* (Butea monosperma), *Plaksha* (Ficus infectoria), *Bilva* (Aegle marmelos), *Khadira* (Acacia catechu), *Śālmalī* (Salmalia malabarica), *Śamī* (Prosopis spicigera) were some of the other better known trees.[99]

Among the fruit-trees the Upanishads mention *Āmra*, *Aksha* (Terminala-bellerica), known as *baheda* in common parlance, *Āmalaka* (Emblica officinalis), the myrobalan, *Kola* (Zizyphus jujuba), the jujubes and *Kadali*, the plantain.[100]

The Brāhmaṇa texts fill in the names of various plants and shrubs not mentioned in the Upanishads. *Muñja*, *Ishīkā* reeds and *Kuśa* grass are referred to.[101] Muñja was considered sacred and from its fibre silk-like threads were produced which were used as the sacrificial thread. Ishīkā stood as an emblem of fragility. Kuśa and Dūrva were used for many sacrificial purposes.

Among the flowers, *Puṇḍarīka* or lotus alone is mentioned in the Upanishads. Two shades of lotus flowers, white or pale and red as the monkey's seat, are hinted at. Lotus ponds also occur.[102]

The Upanishads know the difference between the vegetation coming up in the forests and meadows and the carefully cultivated food grains. The latter are referred to as *Grāmīṇa anna* or village seeds.[103] The Bṛhadāraṇyaka enumerates ten such grains. They are—

1. Vrīhi —rice (Oryza sativa)
2. Yava —barley (Hordeum distichon)
3. Tila —sesamum
4. Māsha —kidney beans (Phaseolus radiatus)
5. Aṇu —millet (Panicum miliaceum)
6. Priyaṅgu —panic seeds (Panicum italicum)
7. Godhūma —wheat (Triticum vulgare)
8. Masūra —a lentil (Ervum hirstum)
9. Khalva —a pulse (Phaseolus radiatus)
10. Khalakula —vetch (Dolichos uniflorus).

The Chāndogya adds *Sarshapa*, mustard seeds and *Śyāmāka*, millet or canary-seeds.[104]

Fauna

Like the flora, the fauna could also be divided into two categories—the *Grāmya* or domesticated animals and the *Āraṇya* or wild beasts. The Chāndogya Upanishad[105] divides all living creatures into three parts according to the manner of their birth—

Āṇḍaja (oviparous), springing from the egg
Jīvaja (viviparous), springing from a living being
Udbhija, springing from a germ.

The Aitareya Upanishad adds another class, that of *Svedaja*, springing from sweat or heat.[106]

The Bṛhadāraṇyaka speaks of another kind of classification: *ekaśapha* having one, undivided hoof like cows, horses asses and those having divided hoof like sheep and goats.[107]

The animals were held in very high esteem by the Upanishadic people. They meditated on the fivefold Sāman with the image of the animals in their eyes: "One should meditate on the fivefold Sāman among the animals, the goats as the syllable *hiṁ*, the sheep as the *prastāva*, the cows as the *Udgītha*, the horses as the *pratihāra* and the human being as the *nidhana*."[108] Sāman were chanted for the welfare of the animals: "Of the Sāman, I choose the high-sounding one as good for cattle, belonging to Agni."[109] The householder was entreated to secure grass and water for his animals.[110] To be rich in cattle was one of the best wishes, at par with having a long line of succession and a long life.[111]

Among all the animals, domestic or otherwise, the cow was the most important. Its milk, shared by men and animals, was one of the seven foods created by Prajāpati.[112] Milk and all its products were the most favourite items in the dietary. The cow was also a measure of value. Things were bought in exchange with the cow; rewards and fees were given in the form of cows and even the philosophical meditations promised rich dividends in cows.[113] Even weak and old cows

were kept and fed and not driven away or sold.[114] Cow was given as a symbol of speech, with *svāhā*, *vashaṭ*, *hanta* and *svadhā* as its four udders, *prāṇa* as its bull and *manas* as its calf.[115]

If from the point of reverence and utility the cow headed the list, from the point of grace, vigour and speed the horse won the race. It was essential to movement and to speed in war. It drew the chariots of gods, demi-gods, demons and men. The Bṛhadāraṇyaka gives different names for their mounts. "As a *haya* it carried the gods, as a *vājin* the gandharvas, as an *arvan* the asuras and as an *aśva* the men."[116]

The horse was glorified and eulogised during the horse sacrifice. The Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa tells how the horse was the most favoured of all animals, it was the most vigorous, most powerful, most blessed and most famous.[117] The actual ceremony was giving place to speculations and meditations and the Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upanishad opens with a vivid word-picture of the entire universe visualized as the sacrificial horse. Dawn is described as its head, sun as the eye, wind as the breath, Vaiśvānara fire the open mouth, year the body, sky the back and atmosphere the belly, the earth as its chest and the quarters as its sides . . . the stars as its bones, clouds the flesh, . . . rivers the blood-vessels, mountains as its liver and lungs and the herbs and trees as its hair.[118]

The Chāndogya speaks of a powerful rearing animal, "a horse, going to start, tears up the pegs to which it is tethered."[119] It is shown shaking its hair,[120] attached to a chariot[121] and sometimes going out of control of the charioteer.[122] The Upanishads know of the *Saindhava* horse.[123]

Goats and sheep were reared for their wool and meat.[124] Ponies were used for drawing chariots.[125] Donkeys are also mentioned[126] and probably served the same purpose they do even today—of carrying loads from one place to another. In a curious passage of the Chāndogya Upanishad some dogs are shown emulating the priests and chanting Vedic hymns to secure food.[127] Domestication of elephants is indicated by the name Ibhyagrama, for *ibha* means elephant and ibhya stands for a person who owns or tames an elephant.[128] In the Kaṭha Upanishad Yama offers "cattle in plenty, elephants, gold and horses" to Naciketas in lieu of the third boon.[129]

Besides these domesticated animals, a variety of wild animals is also dealt with in the Upanishads. There are *Vyāghra*[130] and *Śārdūla*,[131] the tiger and *Siṁha*,[132] the lion. Wild wolves and boars (*Vṛk* and *Varāha*)[133] find mention in the Chāndogya Upanishad. *Ahi*,[134] the snake and *Kṛkaṭāsasya*,[135] the lizard occur in the Bṛhadāraṇyaka, which also gives various names for the insects. There are *Krimi*[136] (a species of worms), *Kīṭa*, *Pataṅga*[137] (a winged insect or midge), *Daṁśa*[138] (gnat or gad-fly), *Maśaka*[139] (mosquito) and *Plushin*[140] (white ant). *Tṛṇa-jalāyuka*,[141] the leech or caterpillar, *Indragopa*,[142] the scarlet insect called cochineal, and *Urṇanābhi*,[143] the spider are referred to. Bees are often remembered.[144]

The birds occur as a class of the animal kingdom[145] but only *Haṁsa* (flamingo), *Madgu* (diver-bird),[146] *Kraunca*[147] (heron) and *Śakuni*[148] (probably the falcon) are mentioned by name.

Fish are mentioned with the fishermen who caught them with nets.[149] *Bheka*, the frog also occurs.[150]

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भिनद्धाक्ष आनीतोऽभिनद्धाक्षोऽ विसृष्टः। तस्य यथाभिनहनं प्रमुच्य।

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61. Bṛhad. II.6; IV.6; VI.5; see Appen. D, Lists 1-3.
62. Ait. Br. VIII.38.3.
63. Praśna, VI.1.
64. Ibid. I.1; III.1.
65. Cunningham, *Ancient Geography*, p. 438, has misconceived the notion. He relies on Hiouen Thsang (sic) for the identification of Kosala with 'the modern province of Berar'.
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82. Bṛhad. II.6; IV.6.
83. Kaush. II.13.

84. Ait. Br. VII.34.
85. Jai. Up. Br. II.440.
86. Bṛhad. I, 1.1.
87. Ibid. III.2.13.
88. Chānd. V.10.4-6.
89. Bṛhad. II, 1.3; I. 3.24.
90. Ait. Br. VII.34.
91. Kaṭha II.3.1, cf. BG XV.1.
92. Śvet. IV.6.
93. Kaush. I.3.
94. Chānd. VIII.5.3-4; Kaṭha II. 6.1.
95. Chānd. VI.12.1-3.
96. Ait. Br. VII.35.5.
97. Chānd. VI.12.1-3.
98. Bṛhad. VI.3.1; 13.
99. Śat. Br. I.3.3.10; XII.2.7.4; XIII.8.4.1; etc.
100. Chānd. VII.3.1 has the first three and Mait. IV.2 mentions kadalī.
101. Bṛhad. II.3.6; Chānd. IV. 14.3; I.6.7.
102. Bṛhad. IV.3.10 *Pushkariṇī*.
103. Bṛhad. VI.3.13.
104. Chānd. III.14.3.
105. Ibid. VI.3.1.
106. Ait. III.1.2.
107. Bṛhad. I. 4.4.
108. Chānd. II, 6; 18.
109. Ibid. II, 22.1.
110. Bṛhad. I, 4.16.
111. Bṛhad. IV.1.2; II.1.5; Chānd. II, 6; 18; 22; V.17.1; Kaṭha I. 1.23; etc.
112. Bṛhad. I.5.2.
113. Śat. Br. III, 3.3.1-3; Bṛhad. III.1.1; IV.1.2; Kaṭha I.1.23; Chānd. II.6; 18; 22; V.17.1; IV.2.
114. Kaṭha I.1.3.
115. Bṛhad. V.8.
116. Bṛhad. I.1.2.
117. Śat. Br. VI.3.3.13; XII.1.2. 5-8.
118. Bṛhad. I.1.1.
119. Chānd. V.1.12.
120. Ibid. VIII.13.
121. Ibid. VIII.12.3.
122. Kaṭha I.3.5.
123. Bṛhad. VI.2.13.
124. Bṛhad. I.4.4.
125. Chānd. IV.2; also names like Śvetāśvatara and Aśvatarāśvī.
126. Bṛhad. I.4.4 Gardabhīvipīta.
127. Chānd. I.12.
128. Ibid. I.10.1.
129. Kaṭha I.1.23.
130. Chānd. VI.9.3; VI.10.2.
131. Kaush. I.2.
132. Ibid. I.2; Chānd. VI.9.3; VI. 10.2.
133. Chānd. VI.9.3.
134. Bṛhad. IV.4.7.
135. Ibid. I.5.14.
136. Bṛhad. VI.1.14.
137. Ibid. VI.1.14; Chānd. VI.9.3; VI.10.2.
138. Chānd. VI.9.3; 10.2; Mait. I.4.
139. Chānd. VI.9.3; 10.2; Mait. I.4.
140. Bṛhad. I.3.22.
141. Ibid. IV.4.3.
142. Ibid. II.3.6.
143. Muṇḍ. I.1.7.
144. Chānd. VI.9.1; Praśna II.4.
145. Ait. III.1.2.
146. Chānd. IV.5-8.
147. Ibid. II.22.1.
148. Ibid. VI.8.2.
149. Mait. VI.26.
150. Ibid. I.4.

CHAPTER IV

State and Administration

Max Müller once said that Indians were a nation of philosophers and that Indian intellect was lacking in political or material speculation.[1] As far as the Upanishads go this statement has some grounds. The Upanishads are indeed philosophical treatises and they are sadly lacking in information about political ideas and institutions. Some stray references to kings, their kingdoms, the officials and administration, however, do give an insight of the matter. The succeeding literature, specially the Dharmasūtras and the Smṛtis are text-books on ancient Indian polity and even the preceding, i.e. the Brāhmaṇas provide us with some useful information.

State

In the early Vedic age the state was more tribal than territorial. The kings of the Bharatas, Yadus, Anus or Druhyus were the chiefs of their respective tribes, wherever they happened to be settled at a given time. By the time of the Upanishads, the states, although still named after the tribes, had become territorial units, with their boundaries, more or less, clearly defined. The Upanishads mention the kingdoms by the name of the people, e.g. the Madras,[2] the Videhas,[3] the Kurus,[4] the Pañcālas[5] and the Mahāvṛshas.[6] The 'floating state' of these tribes and their final settling down is evident from the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa which defines

Sadānīrā as the demarcating line between the kingdoms of Kosala and Videha,[7] both of which are mentioned in the Upanishads.[8]

The states were primarily known as Janas and Janapadas. The Chāndogya Upanishad mentions the kingdom of Aśvapati Kaikeya as a Janapada.[9] A passage in the Bṛhadāraṇyaka refers to the people as Jānapadas and not as Janas.[10] This clearly shows development. At first the people were known by their tribal name, Jana.[11] When these Janas settled down, their land or realm was known as Janapada.[12] Still later, the people belonging to a particular Janapada were known as Jānapadas.

The Chāndogya[13] gives four different names for the principalities—

(1) Rājya
(2) Vairājya
(3) Svārājya
(4) Sāmrājya

The text prescribes praying the Vasus for obtaining Rājya, the Rudras for obtaining Vairājya, the Ādityas for Svārājya and the Viśvedevas for Sāmrājya. The Upanishads do not tell us the exact connotation of these names. Here, the Aitareya, Śatapatha and Gopatha Brāhmaṇas come to the rescue. The Aitareya Brāhmaṇa mentions five divisions of the country, ruled by five different types of rulers. These are—

(1) Prācya, the eastern, ruled by Samrāṭ
(2) Dakshiṇa, the southern, ruled by Bhoja
(3) Pratīcya, the western, ruled by Svarāṭ
(4) Udīcya, the northern, ruled by Virāṭ and
(5) Dhruvā madhyamā dik, the firmly established middle quarter, ruled by Rājā.[14]

The gods who granted these kingdoms were the Vasus, the Rudras, the Ādityas, the Viśvedevas and the Sādhyas and Āptyas, respectively. The order is quite different from the Chāndogya passage.

(Gods)	(Ait. Br.)	(Chānd.)
the Vasus	Sāmrājya	Rājya
the Rudras	Bhaujya	Vairājya
the Ādityas	Svārājya	Svārājya
the Viśvedevas	Vairājya	Sāmrājya
the Sādhyas & Āptyas	Rājya	—

How and why these particular gods came to be associated with these particular forms of monarchy and how they changed course, is merely a matter of conjecture. Only wild guessing can provide the answers.

The Śatapatha hints that these names show gradations. It seems that a ruler was entitled to be called a Rājā when he performed the Rājasūya sacrifice and a Samrāṭ when he performed the Vājapeya. A Rājā wants to be Samrāṭ but Samrāṭ does not want to be a Rājā, for, Rājya is lower and Sāmrājya higher.[15]

The fact that the kings of the middle country, the Kuru-Pañcāla region, are actually addressed as Rājan[16] and those of the eastern region as Samrāṭ,[17] even in the Upanishads, gives weight to the theory of the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa that the kings were known by different epithets in different regions. It is then quite natural for the Śatapatha to put Samrāṭ over Rājā, as it shows unmistakable affinity to the Videha region and its ruler Janaka.[18]

The term *Gaṇa* occurs twice in the Bṛhadāraṇyaka but it certainly does not indicate a non-monarchical, republican state. In the first instance Brahman is supposed to have created the viś: all the gods who are designated in groups *Gaṇas*, like the Vasus, Rudras, Ādityas, Viśvedevas and Maruts.[19] In the second passage Ajātaśatru tells Bālāki that one who meditates on the quarters as the second who never leaves us, becomes possessed of a second and his company *Gaṇa* is never cut off from him.[20]

King

The popularity of the institution of kingship is apparent from the fact that the Upanishads mention no fewer than nine kingdoms and never a republic. The Chāndogya mentions

the king of the Kurus performing a sacrifice in order to provide relief for the drought-hit populace.[21] The king of the Mahāvṛshas, Jānaśruti Pautrāyaṇa, was anxious for the welfare of his people.[22] Pravāhaṇa Jaivali of the Pañcālas and Aśvapati of the Kekayas, well-known for their spiritual wisdom, were nonetheless concerned with the moral uplift of their kingdoms.[23] Ajātaśatru of the Kāśīs tried to emulate the example of the scholarly Janaka of the Videhas.[24] Hiraṇyanābha, the prince of the Kosalas[25] and Citra Gāṅgyāyani of the unknown state are also known.[26] Aikshvāka Bṛhadratha is mentioned in the Maitrāyaṇī Upanishad as having renounced his kingdom after reaching a ripe old age.[27]

The need for a king arose when faced with the fear of external invasion or internal strife. Both these reasons precipitated the idea of kingship. The Aitareya Brāhmaṇa narrates how the asuras were gaining victory over the devas, who realized that it was on account of their having no king that the asuras were conquering. So, with common consent they elected Soma as their king and the tide soon turned in their favour.[28] The Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa shows the devas quarrelling among themselves. They were divided into four factions and were envious of each other. The asuras saw the loophole and entered their ranks. The gods knew that they would be defeated unless they united, depending only on one leader. They chose Indra and conquered the asuras.[29]

These legends about the origin of a divine king reflect the emergence of the earthly counterpart. The rival groups of Aryans were constantly fighting each other on boundary feuds and cattle-lifting charges. They needed a capable military leader. The maintenance of law and order within the tribal groups also needed a firm hand on the reigns. The king was elected for these two basic reasons and they remained his two chief preoccupations.

The Brāhmaṇas show the kings as desirous of conquering larger territories, enabling them to perform ambitious sacrifices like the Vājapeya, Aśvamedha, Sarvarāṭ, etc.[30] But the Upanishadic kings were ambitious in another direction. With the exception of the Maitrāyaṇī Upanishad, which gives a list of the great bow-wielding monarchs like Sudyumna, Bhūridyumna, Indradyumna, Kuvalayāśva, Yauvaṇāśva,

Vadhryāśva, Aśvapati, Śaśabindu, Hariścandra, Ambarīsha, Ānanakta, Śaryāti, Yayati, Anaraṇya and Ukshasena,[31] the other Upanishads do not know of any king with a warlike disposition. Most of them conform to the idea of Aśoka's Dhamma Vijaya. None of them is mentioned as having an army, *senā*, or a commander-in-chief, *senāpati*; none of them goes on any military expedition. On the other hand, most of them show religious and philosophical leanings. To cite a few characteristic examples; Janaka, Pravāhaṇa, Aśvapati, the Kuru king and Citra are all either performing the sacrifice, Yajamāna or willing to do so, Yakshyamāṇa.[32] Also, they are all desirous of philosophical dialogues and arrange symposia where scholars could meet, and discuss matters pertaining to psychology, eschatology and metaphysics.[33] The Buddha is reported to have said that he would like to be the 'Cakkavatti dhammiko dhammarājā', having conquered the earth without the use of punishment and power,[34] whereas the Upanishadic kings want to be known for their intellectual ability and kindness of heart. Ajātaśatru proves his merit as an intellectual by disproving all Bālāki's theories[35] and Jānaśruti was a pious giver, bestowing much wealth upon the people and always keeping open house. He got *āvasathas* built everywhere, so that people everywhere should eat his food.[36]

The person of a king can be visualized in the Maitrāyaṇī description of the doorkeeper of Brahman, who has on a Mauli, Kuṇḍala, bow and arrow.[37] The word Daṇḍa also occurs but that is not the sceptre or the rod of justice, but only the stick part of the bow as against the string.

Of the royal family, a daughter is known from the Chāndogya Upanishad. Jānaśruti was eager to obtain the goodwill of Raikva Sayugvan, so he gave away his daughter in marriage to the latter and Raikva, who was most reluctant to part with his knowledge in lieu of cows, chariots and *nishka*, agreed to teach the king when he saw the face of the princess.[38] It seems the Brāhmaṇa practice of the father having full rights over the life and limb of his offspring continued in the Upanishads.

A prince, *rājaputra*, of the Kosalas is known from the Praśna Upanishad.[39] No other member of the family is mentioned.

The personal property of the king mainly consisted of cattle, gold, chariots, etc. This is borne out by the fact that both Jānaśruti Pautrāyaṇa and Janaka Vaideha proffer cows in large numbers, with *nishka* and *pāda*, to their respective preceptors.[40] Whether or not the entire land was owned by the kings, is not made clear by the Upanishads. The Chāndogya hints that the distribution of land for cultivation was the king's prerogative.[41] But it does not suggest ownership. On the other hand, the same text shows Jānaśruti donating a village,[42] which points out that the land was his to be given away. This again is not very reliable evidence, for, by giving away a village, the king might have meant merely the transfer of revenue in Raikva's favour.

The residence of the king might be reconstructed on the basis of a passage describing the Brahmaloka in the Kaushītaki Upanishad.[43] There is a *Hrada* (tank or moat), a river, a tree, the *Saṁsthāna*, the *Āyatana*, the two doorkeepers, the *Pramita* (hall), *Āsandi* (throne), *Paryaṅka* (couch), and the *Priyā* (beloved, probably the chief queen).

A newcomer is ushered in by female attendants, who also look after his creature comforts.[44]

In this passage the importance of water is evident from the mention of the tank or moat and the river. It seems the settlements of a more or less permanent nature were usually built near a river, but at the same time water was stored in artificial reservoirs for extra consumption or against calamities. The *Saṁsthāna* has been explained by the commentator as the city because it accommodated many people.[45] Āyatana is the palace and Pramita the hall. Āsandī, although popularly known as the throne, has been rendered as the raised platform in the hall on which the Paryaṅka or couch of Brahman is kept. King Janaka is referred to as sitting on a *Kūrca*.[46]

The Bṛhadāraṇyaka talks about creating chariots, roads, tanks, lotus ponds and canals where none exist.[47]

All this shows that the king lived in considerably comfortable and pleasant surroundings.

The king visited the Sabhā in the mornings.[48] Scholars were free to approach him at any time, even when he was being looked after by his attendants.[49] His Parishad or Samiti was the meeting ground for itinerant philosophers and

priests. The king listened to the discourses with great interest and sometimes even contributed to them.[50]

He addressed the brāhmaṇas by name although they called him by his title or by respectful epithets.[51] When visited by a renowned scholar, the king brought him a seat with his own hands and caused others to bring water.[52]

He was the overall sovereign, who probably had great rights over his people. Janaka, when satisfied with the erudite scholarship of Yājñavalkya, offers himself and his subjects as slaves.[53] This confidence could only emanate from the affection of the people and from the faithful discharge of duty. And despite their leanings towards higher things in life, the Upanishadic kings were not found neglecting their duty towards the state and the people. When the Kuru kingdom was reduced to drought condition because of the hailstorm or the locusts, the Kuru king felt concerned and instigated a sacrifice to provide relief to his people.[54] Even Aśvapati, famed for his theories about the Ātmā Vaiśvānara, looked after the administrative side quite efficiently and was proud enough to record for posterity that his kingdom was free of vices.[55]

The king is reported to be moving freely within his kingdom, accompanied by his people.[56] The subjects obey his instructions and live on the exploits of their fields.[57] He appointed officials saying "rule these villages or those."[58] This might be taken as indicative of decentralization of power. But, in any case the villages always had their rulers in Grāmaṇī, mentioned right from the Ṛgveda.[59]

The Bṛhadāraṇyaka alludes to a king going about his kingdom. The village officials, Ugra, Pratyenas, Sūta and Grāmaṇī awaited his arrival, with food, drink and a resting-place in readiness, calling out, "Here he comes", every now and then. And when he departed, they gathered around him to bid him farewell.[60]

Officials

The Upanishads mention the appointment of village authorities by the king.[61] The *Ugra*, *Pratyenas*, *Sūta* and *Grāmaṇī*

welcomed him and sped him on his journey when he visited their area on a tour of inspection.[62]

The Kaushītaki knows of a *Dūta*, *Goptṛ*, *Saṁśrāvayitṛ* and *Pariveshṭrī*, belonging to the king's entourage.[63] The same text mentions doorkeepers as *Dvāragopa*[64] and the Chāndogya mentions *Kshattri*.[65] Among these Sūta, Grāmaṇī and Kshattri were included in the list of the Ratnins given in the later Saṁhitās and the Brāhmaṇas, along with the Purohita, Mahishī and Senānī.[66]

Sūta occurs in all the lists and is usually taken to be the charioteer or master of horse. Mookerji suggests that he might also be the minstrel or court poet in view of the epithets Ahanti (non-fighter), Ahantya or Ahantva.[67]

Grāmaṇī is taken as a Ratnin in most of the texts. He was a military official in the Ṛgveda according to Zimmer, but Macdonell saw no reason to restrict the sense. Grāmaṇī then was the head of the village both for civil and military purposes.[68]

Kshattri, who was said to be a doorkeeper by the commentator Mahīdhara, has been given the more dignified status of *antaḥpurādhyaksha*, a chamberlain.[69] The latter sense is indicated in the Chāndogya reference also.

Ugra and Pratyenas together constitute the police force, although Max Müller renders Pratyenas as a magistrate. Dūta was the messenger or envoy, Goptṛ, the protector, Saṁśrāvayitṛ, the attendant who announced visitors and Pariveshṭrī the female attendant or handmaid.

The administrative machinery of the Upanishadic period was not much removed from that of the Brāhmaṇas. The important positions held by the Ratnins in the Rājasūya sacrifice must have been enjoyed by them in the Upanishads also. That they do not find mention in the Upanishadic texts is due to the fact that they are principally philosophical expositions with hardly any occasion to refer to the political people. Any references in passing occur to illustrate a philosophical point.

The influential officials were called *Rājakṛta*, or the king-makers, without whose consent a king could not be consecrated. The king-elect had to abdicate in favour of some other member of the royal family if the king-makers did not support him.

For the purpose of the *Ratna-havisha-ishti*, these important persons were called Ratnins, the jewel-bearers probably because they were the keepers of the jewel—king, or because they were like jewels in the royal crown. The king-elect visited each of them in turn and offered oblations at their place, in order to ensure their loyalty. The list included[70]—

(1) Purohita or Brahman
(2) Sacrificer or Rājanya
(3) Mahishī or the chief queen. (Sometimes other queens like Parivṛktā, the neglected one, and Vāvātā, the favourite one, are also included in the list.)
(4) Senānī, the commander-in-chief
(5) Sūta, charioteer or minstrel
(6) Grāmaṇī, the village head
(7) Kshattṛ, the chamberlain
(8) Samgrahītṛ, the treasurer
(9) Bhāgadugha, the tax-collector
(10) Akshāvāpa, the superintendent of dice
(11) Govikartana, rendered cow-butcher, designates the huntsman
(12) Pālāgala, the messenger or courier
(13) Takshan, the carpenter
(14) Rathakāra, the chariot-wright.[71]

Jayaswal believes them to have been selected on the principle of class and caste-representation.[72] The purohita represented the brāhmaṇas and the Senānī, Rājanya and Mahishī represented the kshatriyas. The vaiśyas were represented by the Grāmaṇī and Rathakāra and the śūdras by Akshāvāpa and Govikartana. The Maitrāyaṇī Saṁhitā declared them to be the limbs of the king, and the king whose Ratnins were vigorous became vigorous himself.[73]

The Ratnins always remained faithful followers of the king. They had a chance to express their opinion in favour of or against the king-elect before the consecration ceremony, but once they had made their choice, they had to abide by it 'for better or worse'.

The Ratnins formed the cabinet. They were the king's counsellors and the king depended on them for guidance and

good counsel. The priest, the commander-in-chief, the subsidiary kings and the queen held important positions. The rural unit made its appearance in Grāmaṇī. Sūta and kshattṛ looked after their duties. Saṁgrahītṛ and Bhāgadugha hint at a revenue and tax-collection system. Their identification is not accepted by Rau, as he feels that the revenue system was not so developed at the time.[74] But there is ample reference to Bali or Bhāga in the Brāhmaṇa literature to put it within the range of probabilities. Akshāvāpa was a public officer, who superintended gambling and collected the revenue thereof.

Assemblies

Tribal assemblies provided a check on the autocracy of the king and shared some of his duties. Vedic literature preserves the names of Sabhā, Samiti, Parishad and Vidatha, although their precise functions are not definitely known. The Upanishads also use the words Sabhā, Samiti and Parishad. Vidatha does not make an appearance.

The term Sabhā occurs only twice in the Upanishads. Once, it is called the Prajāpati's Sabhā and Veśma.[75] The translators have rendered it as the assembly-hall and the abode respectively. The second instance mentions Uddālaka Āruṇi visiting the Pañcāla king Pravāhaṇa who had gone to the Sabhā in the morning.[76] The term *Sabhāga* seems to be common in reference to the kings[77] which indicates that the kings were particular in visiting the sabhā or the audience-hall daily.

Samiti, the other daughter of Prajāpati,[78] is also associated with the Pañcālas.[79] In fact, both Sabhā and Samiti make their appearance in the same context. Śvetaketu had gone to the Samiti of the Pañcālas, where the king asked him perplexing questions, the answers to which he did not know. He then ran away to his father and accused him of not teaching him properly. The father Uddālaka did not know the topics, so he went to the king for enlightenment. Next morning when the king was in the Sabhā, Uddālaka confronted him with his questionnaire.

It can be inferred from this passage that the Samiti was a select body of the élite, which specially entertained intellectuals. The Bṛhadāraṇyaka provides further proof of this role.

It shows that parents aspired for a learned son, who would frequent the Samiti and speak delightful words.[80] This text mentions Parishad in lieu of Samiti as the academic council of the Pañcālas.[81]

The exact nature and function of these assemblies has been a much discussed subject among scholars. Macdonell does not deem it possible to distinguish the Sabhā and Samiti. He describes both as 'assemblies', only Sabhā meant the assembly-hall as well.[82] He quotes the views of earlier scholars like Ludwig, Zimmer, Bloomfield and Hillebrandt. Ludwig took the Sabhā to be the assembly, not of all the people but of the brāhmaṇas and rich patrons, whereas the Samiti included all the people, primarily the viśas, but also the *maghavans* and brāhmaṇas. Zimmer is satisfied that the Sabhā was the meeting place of the village council, presided over by the Grāmaṇī.

Jayaswal was of the opinion that the Samiti was the national assembly of the whole people and Sabhā was the national judicature.[83]

The most noteworthy attempt was that of Mookerji,[84] who analyzed the character of Sabhā and Samiti based entirely on the actual references to them occurring all over the range of Vedic literature and not depending on conjectures and parallels from abroad. He has shown that the two were the original and earliest institutions of Indian polity. Sabhā functioned as a parliament for disposal of public business by debate and discussion. It also served as a court of justice. Samiti was the larger, general assembly of people, which had its say in the choice of the king.

Kane is of the opinion on the basis of the Chāndogya reference, that both the terms Sabhā and Samiti applied to the same assembly. It was an assembly of people to which the king, learned men and others went. It is extremely doubtful whether it was an elective body. Probably it was an *ad hoc* assembly of such people as cared to be present.[85]

Sharma[86] believes that the Sabhā was originally the tribal assembly which later assumed a patriarchal and aristocratic character. The Samiti made its appearance only in the latest portions of the Ṛgveda. Early Samiti, according to him, was a folk-assembly where people transacted tribal business. But

it served several political and non-political purposes later. The Upanishads show its philosophical function; Yāska takes Samiti to mean battle, signifying its military function; and the election and re-election of the kings at the hands of the Samiti suggests its political function.

However, in view of the Upanishadic references we might safely assume that the Samiti was more academic in nature and Sabhā was the administrative or judicial council, frequented by the king. The lack of evidence does not make one positive in asserting these conjectures, but they seem to be the most plausible ones.

Parishad, which is given as an alternative for Samiti, in the Bṛhadāraṇyaka version of the Śvetaketu-Pravāhaṇa story,[87] is fairly well-known from later literature. The Vedic literature shows only stray references but the Jātakas, Arthaśāstra of Kauṭilya, the inscriptions of Aśoka and the Dharmaśāstras often mention it. Sharma believes early Parishad to be the tribal military assembly, showing pre-Aryan character. Later it tended to become partly an academy and partly a royal council. Its academic character is suggested by the Upanishadic and Gobhila Gṛhya Sūtra references and the Pāraskarīya Gṛhya Sūtra gives evidence of its being a royal council.[88]

Vidatha, which is not mentioned in the Upanishads at all, was nonetheless an important institution in the Ṛgveda. The relative decrease of Vidatha in the Atharvaveda and increase of Sabhā and Samiti proves that these latter were gaining more importance in the later Saṁhitās. Jayaswal goes even as far as to say that Vidatha was the parent folk assembly from which Sabhā, Samiti and Senā differentiated.[89]

Law

Religion and law were synonymous in ancient India, both known by the term *Dharma*. Therefore, it is quite natural that law, before it was specifically laid down in the Smṛti literature, was inseparable from religious doctrines. The Upanishads prescribe religious rites, philosophical meditations and ethical principles in the same breath.[90]

Dharma or Vidhi is described as being born from Brahman.

The Bṛhadāraṇyaka shows that Brahman was all alone and did not prosper. He created kshatra, viś and śūdra but still did not prosper. So, he created the most excellent law—Dharma. Dharma was the power of the kshatra and there was nothing beyond it. Hence, even a weak man strove to defeat a much stronger one with the help of Dharma, as one does with the help of the king.[91]

The Muṇḍaka also ascribes the origin of Vidhi to Brahman.[92]

Śaṅkarācārya describes that which is known and that which is practised as Dharma.[93] It is identical with truth. One who speaks the truth follows Dharma and vice-versa.[94] From the earliest times the kings are described as those who buy the truth and those who receive or take up the truth.[95]

Dharma and Satya are like honey to all beings and all beings are like honey to them. They are mutually dependent like the bees and honey. The bees make honey and honey supports them. Similarly, men make laws and law upholds men.[96] Pūshan is prayed to take away the covering so that Dharma and Satya could be glimpsed.[97]

The Upanishadic concept of Dharma is quite different from that of the Smṛtis. Whereas in the Smṛtis Dharma has been institutionalized and the legal procedure penalized, in the Upanishads we usually have ethical and moral codes of conduct being preached under the heading of Dharma. These came in the field of ethics and did bind a man legally. A number of examples can be cited. The Chāndogya gives the three divisions of Dharma as—

1. Sacrifice, study and almsgiving
2. Austerity
3. To dwell at the house of the teacher, leading the life of a celibate, controlling desires.[98]

There is great emphasis on speaking truth. Time and again the Upanishads extol the virtue of truthfulness.[99] Verily to his roots, he withers, who speaks untruth.[100] Penance and austerity are sure ways to reaching the sublime. Those who have not refrained from wickedness, the unrestrained, the unmeditative and the fickle-minded can never reach there.[101]

One should never covet any man's wealth and should consider every living being's troubles as one's own.[102] Prajāpati's advice to his threefold offspring holds good for men: those who are naturally unruly should practise self-control, those who are naturally avaricious should practise charity and those who are cruel should be kind to all.[103]

These were more ethical doctrines than legal dos and don'ts. Therefore, the person who observed the prescribed rules was promised the world of heaven or the realization of Ātman or Brahman. One who did not stick to this ethical code was referred to cycles of rebirth or hell as the case might be, but hardly suffered a legal penalty.

There were crimes which were liable to legal punishment. The Kaushītaki hints that the killing of one's mother or father, a brāhmaṇa or even stealing was punished by death.[104] The Chāndogya tells us that those who steal gold, drink spirit, defile the teacher's bed and kill a brāhmaṇa definitely fall and so does one who associates with them.[105] The use of the word *Patanti*, from the root *pat*, seems to indicate the closeness to the later-day concept of the five *Pātakas*. The king who could truthfully claim that his kingdom was free of thieves, misers, drunkards, non-believers, ignorants and adulterers, much less adulteresses, was praiseworthy indeed.[106]

The Chāndogya indicates that it was the small people who became quarrelsome, abusive and slandering.[107]

The Maitrāyaṇī lays most of the guilts at the door of the Tamoguṇa and Rajoguṇa. Bewilderment, fear, grief, sleep, sloth, carelessness, decay, sorrow, hunger, thirst, niggardliness, wrath, infidelity, ignorance, envy, cruelty, folly, shamelessness, meanness, pride and changeability are the results of the Tamoguṇa.

Inward thirst, fondness, passion, covetousness, unkindness, love, hatred, deceit, jealousy, vain restlessness, fickleness, unstableness, emulation, greed, patronising of friends, family pride, aversion to disagreeable objects, devotion to agreeable objects, whispering, and prodigality are the results of the Rajoguṇa.[108]

The same text gives it as its considered opinion that many people (following perfectly harmless occupations) are clearly thieves and unworthy of heaven. With them one should not

associate. Among them are people—who are always merry, always abroad, always begging, always making a living by śilpa; and others who are begging in towns, performing sacrifices for the *ayājyas* (those who are not allowed to offer sacrifices), who learn from the śūdras and the śūdras well-versed in scriptures; and others who are malignant, who use bad language, dancers, prize-fighters, travelling mendicants, actors, those who have been degraded in the king's service; and others who pretend to exorcise evil influences for money; and others who falsely wear *Kashāya* dresses, earrings and skulls; as also those who wish to entice by the jugglery of false arguments, mere comparisons and paralogisms.[109]

The Bṛhadāraṇyaka mentions robbers[110] and men having liaison with other people's wives.[111]

Some kind of a punishment is hinted at by the Maitrāyaṇī Upanishad which refers to the state of a prisoner, lacking independence and a man bound by the fetters suffering restriction of movement.[112] The Chāndogya describes the most of punishing by ordeals. The passage runs as follows—

They lead a man, seized by the hand, saying, 'He has committed a theft, heat the axe for him'. If he has committed the theft, then he makes himself a liar. Being given to untruth, covering himself by untruth, he takes hold of the heated axe and is burnt. Then he is killed. But if he is not guilty, thereupon he makes himself true. Being given to truth, covering himself by truth, he takes hold of the heated axe and is not burnt. Then he is released.[113]

This is a solitary example of the belief in the efficacy of the ordeals in the Vedic literature.

The passage could have been incorporated into the text later. A critical study of the philosophy expounded by Uddālaka shows the discrepancy between his extent of knowledge as expressed by the sections I-VII of the Chapter VI and the sections VIII-XVI. The latter show a change in the idea and the expression and might be a later addition. Incidentally, the two verses, which have bearing upon the crime and punishment[114] and have been quoted above, are also very classical-looking verses. Their language, style and subject-matter resemble the Smṛtis. They might also have been later interpolations.

The system of Vairadeya or Wergeld, though common in the Saṁhitā and Brāhmaṇa texts, does not find mention in the Upanishads.

The king, who was responsible for maintaining law and order of society, must have been allotted some judicial duties and rights. The idea of the king borrowed heavily from the idea of king Varuṇa, the *Ṛta-niyantā*, who balanced the cosmic order and punished ethical lapses. The king, described as the representative of Varuṇa, was responsible for the ethics of society.[115] In the absence of any evidence pertaining to the process of assessing the crimes and pronouncing judgement, it is safer to confess ignorance than give false ideas.

By the way, the king is seen appointing the village authorities;[116] it seems the judicature at a local level was also entrusted to them. The Grāmaṇī, Sūta, Ugra and Pratyenas constituted the local authorities[117] and one or more of them must have served the purpose of magistrates at the village-level. The king must have been the highest judicial authority.

The law was not always crime and punishment only. There must have been laws of ownership and inheritance, although not much is known from the Upanishads. Yājñavalkya is seen prepared to distribute his property between his two wives.[118] The father, after reaching the age of retirement, gave away his property, the household fires and the traditions into the keeping of his eldest son in a handing-over ceremony.[119] It seems the son did not inherit property on force of being born into the family but waited until the father made him the owner. The portion was known as Dāya or Bhāga and the claimants were called Bhāgin or Bhāginī.[120]

The use of the term *Bhāginī* in the feminine gender, as also Maitreyī and Kātyāyanī being claimants to Yājñavalkya's property, shows that women had rights to property.

A Note on the Non-Monarchical States

The Ṛgveda describes a number of kings, sitting down together in the assembly.[121] Even the later Vedic literature does not show any sharp distinction between rājā, rājanya and kshatra. It indicates that others besides the king had a say in the government which, in turn, indicates a republican tendency.

However, none of the principal Upanishads mentions any republic by name. The only trace of a non-monarchical state is to be found in the name of Madras, who are mentioned twice in the Bṛhadāraṇyaka[122] but their king is not mentioned even once. It has been suggested that this is what was meant by the term Vairājya, alluding to a kingless state.[123] But this idea is negated by others who take Vairājya to be a type of kingship and not a non-monarchical state.[124]

That republics do not occur in the Upanishadic texts might, up to some extent, be due to the fact that the republics were all situated just outside the hub of the Upanishadic inhabitation. A glance at the political map of India around the 6th century B.C. shows that the monarchies were concentrated in the Gangetic plain, whereas the republics were ranged round the northern periphery of these kingdoms, along the Himalayan foothills. The situation of the republics in the less fertile hilly tracts might suggest that the establishment of the republics pre-dated the monarchies, since the wooded low-lying hills would have been easier to be made habitable than the marshy jungles of the plain. On the other hand, it might be probable that "the more independent-minded Aryan settlers of the plains, rebelling against the increasing strength of orthodoxy in the monarchies, moved up the hills and established communities which were more in keeping with tribal traditions, such as the early settlements in Punjab."[125]

The monarchies preserved the traditions of the Vedic godheads and Brahmanic rituals. With the changing times, they showed Āraṇyaka speculations and Upanishadic scepticism, but kept largely to the right side of the priesthood.[126] The republics showed a leaning towards the unorthodox views. Two of the most famous expounders of the new heterodox sects—the Buddha and Mahāvīra, belonged to republics and their religions had great supporters in the republicans.[127]

This shows that the monarchies stuck to the Vedic tradition and patronized the Upanishadic thinkers, whereas the republics took to the non-Vedic traditions preached by Jainism and Buddhism. Therefore, it is natural to find the Upanishads mentioning only monarchies and the Pali literature giving more importance to the republics. The Buddha not only praised the

republican form of government but also emulated the pattern of Vajjian republic in the workings of his own Saṁgha.

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2. Bṛhad. III.3; 7 मद्रेषु चरकः।
3. Ibid. IV.2.4; 4.23 विदेहान् ददामि।
4. Chānd. I.10.1 यटची हतेषु कुरुषु।
5. Ibid. V.3.1 पञ्चालानां समितिम्; also Bṛhad. VI.2.1.
6. Ibid. IV.2.5 महावृषेषु।
7. Śat. Br. I.4.1.10-17 एतर्हि कोसलविदेहानां मर्यादा।
8. *Kosala* Praśna I.1; III.1; VI. 1; *Videha* Bṛhad. III-IV.
9. Chānd. V.11.5 न मे स्तेनो **जनपदे**।
10. Bṛhad. II.1.18 स यथा महाराजो जानपदान् गृहीत्वा स्वेजनपदे यथाकामं परिवर्तेत्।
11. *Pañca-Janāḥ* occurs frequently in RV.
12. Taitt. Br. II.3.9.9; etc.
13. Chānd. II.24.3-13.
14. Ait. Br. VIII.38.3.
15. Śat. Br. V.1.1.13; Mookerji, *Hindu Cz.*, pp. 97-8 quotes Go. Br. to have said that one became Rājā after performing Rājasūya, Samrāṭ after Vājapeya, Svarāṭ after Aśvamedha, Virāṭ after Purushamedha and Sarvarāṭ after Sarvamedha.
16. Chānd. I.10.6; V.3.6. The Bṛhad. version of the Pravāhaṇa story does not mention the word Rājā; only derogatively '*Rājanyabandhu*'.
17. Bṛhad. IV.1; 2; etc.
18. Janaka Vaideha plays very important role in the Śat. Br. and affiliated texts. The colonization of Videha by the pioneer Videgha Māthava is also recorded there.
19. Bṛhad. I.4.12 स विशमसृजत् यान्येतानि देवजातानि गणश आख्यायन्ते।
20. Bṛhad. II.I.11 नास्यात् गणश्छिद्यते।
21. Chānd. I.10.6.
22. Ibid. IV.1.1.
23. Ibid. V.3.1; 10.9-10; 11.5; Bṛhad. VI.2.1-2.
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25. Praśna VI.1.
26. Kaush. I.I.
27. Mait. I.1-2.
28. Ait. Br. VIII.38 3.
29. Śat. Br. III 4.2.1-2.
30. Śat. Br. V.5.2.3-5; XIII.5.4. 1-3.
31. Mait. I.4.
32. Bṛhad. III.1.1; Chānd. V.3.7; 11.5 यक्ष्यमाणो वै अहमस्मि।
33. Ibid. II.1.
34. *Dīgha Nikaya*, Lakkhana Suttanta (ed. J. Kashyap, Nalanda, 1958), p. 110.
35. Bṛhad. II.1; Kaush. IV.
36. Chānd. IV.1.1.
37. Mait. VI.28.
38. Chānd. IV.2.4-5.
39. Praśna VI.1.
40. Chānd. IV.2.1-4; Bṛhad. III. 1.1; IV.1.1-7; etc.
41. Chānd. VIII.1.5.
42. Ibid. IV.2.4.
43. Kaush. I.3.

44. Ibid. I.4.
45. See Radhakrishnan, *The Princ. Upas.*, p. 756.
46. Bṛhad. IV.2.1.
47. Ibid. IV.3.10 रथाः, पन्थानः, वेशान्ताः, पुष्करिण्यः, स्रवन्त्यः ।
48. Chānd. V.3.6 स ह प्रातः सभाग उदेयाय···
49. Bṛhad. VI.2.1 परिचारयमाणम् ।
50. Chānd. I.10; V.3-10; 11-17; Brhad. II.1; III.1.1; IV.1-7; VI.2; etc.
51. Bṛhad. IV.1-2.
52. Ibid. VI.2.4.
53. Bṛhad. IV.4.23 सोऽहं भगवते विदेहान् पदामि, मम चापि सह दास्यायेति ।
54. Chānd. I.10.1; 6.
55. Ibid. V.11.5.
56. Bṛhad. II.1.18.
57. Chānd. VIII.1.5.
58. Praśna III.4.
59. RV X.62.11; 107.5.
60. Bṛhad. IV.3.37-8.
61. Praśna III.4.
62. Bṛhad. IV.3.37-8.
63. Kaush. II.1.
64. Ibid. I.5.
65. Chānd. IV.1.5-8.
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67. Mookerji, *Hindu Cz.*, p. 103.
68. *Vedic Index*, SV Grāma.
69. Sāyaṇa commenting on Śat. Br. V.3.1.7.
70. Several texts give details of the Rājasūya and the names of the Ratnins. Among them are—Taitt. Saṁ. I.8.9.1 et seq; Mait. Saṁ. II.6.5; Kāṭh. Saṁ. XV.4; Tait. Br. I.7.3.1 et seq; Śat. Br. V.3.1.1 et seq. Their connotations are to be had in Kane, *Hist. of Dharmaśāstra*, III, pp. 975-1007.
71. The last two are mentioned only in the Mait. Saṁ.
72. Jayaswal, *Hindu Polity*, Pt. I, pp. 20-1.
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76. Ibid. V.3.6 स ह प्रातः सभाग उदेयाय तं होवाच ।
77. Śat. Br. II.5.2.25; III.3.4.14; etc.
78. AV VII.12.1 describes the Sabhā and Samiti as the twin daughters of Prajāpati.
79. Chānd. V.3.1 पञ्चालानां समितिम् एयाय ।
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90. Kena IV.8 तस्यै तपो दम कर्मेति प्रतिष्ठा, वेदाः सर्वांगानि, सत्यम् आयतनम् ।
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95. RV X.109.6 सत्यं कृण्वानः । AV V.17.10 सत्यं गृह्णानः ।

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103. Bṛhad. V.2 दाम्यत दत्त दयध्वम्।
104. Kaush. III.1.
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106. Ibid. V.11.5.
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111. Ibid. VI.4.12 जायायै जारः।
112. Mait. IV.2.
113. Chānd. VI.16.1-2.
114. Ibid. V.10.9; 11.5.
115. Cf. Chānd. V.11.5.
116. Praśna III.4.
117. Bṛhad. IV.3.37-8.
118. Bṛhad. II.4.1; IV.5.1 तेऽनया कात्यायन्यान्तं करवाणीति।
119. Kaush. II.15.
120. Ait. I.2.5.
121. RV X.97.6.
122. Bṛhad. III.3.1; 7.1.
123. Jayaswal, *Hindu Polity*; Majumdar, *Corporate Life in Ancient India*, p. 211.
124. Basu, *India of the Age of the Brahmanas*, p. 88.
125. Thapar, *Hist. of Ind.*, p. 50.
126. Pravāhaṇa, Aśvapati and Janaka were great patrons of Upanishadic philosophy as also the Brahmanic rituals.
127. The Mahāparinibbāna Sutta lists the claimants to the relics of the Buddha as—Licchavis of Vesālī, Sākyas of Kapilavatthu, Bulis of Allakappa, Koliyas of Rāmagāma, Brāhmaṇas of Vethadīpa, Mallas of Kusinara, Dona Brāhmaṇa and Moriyas of Pippalivana, most of whom were republicans.

CHAPTER V

Society

Glimpses into Upanishadic society reveal the existence of Varṇa-division, Āśrama theory, the Saṁskāras, the position of women and much valuable information about the ancient education system, as also the relationship between the teacher and the taught.

Varṇa

The concept of Varṇas is as old as the Ṛgveda, but the kernel of the text shows the term used in its literal sense, that of 'colour'.[1] It signified the difference between the fair Aryan and the dark-skinned Dāsa or Dasyu. The Purusha Sūkta mentions four varṇas as springing forth from the dissected limbs of the sacrificed Purusha.[2] Thus, the transition from varṇa-colour to varṇa-class or caste had already taken place in the Ṛgveda.

By the time of the Yajurveda Saṁhitās the varṇa system had consolidated into four main castes and various other professional classes.[3] The Brāhmaṇas mention the varṇas as an established system. The Śathapatha gives different modes of addressing different varṇas.[4] The Aitareya gives the standing in society of the brāhmaṇa, vaiśya and śūdra in relation to the kshatriya.[5] They trace varṇa-divisions not only among men, but also among the gods, trees and plants, animals and birds.[6]

The Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upanishad mentions the four varṇas

as Brahma, Kshatra, Viś and Śūdra.[7] The Chāndogya recognizes the brāhmaṇa, kshatriya and vaiśya as good births, but places the fourth cāṇḍāla with dogs and hogs as an evil birth.[8] The Kaushītaki mentions only the first three.[9]

The Bṛhadāraṇyaka tells us that Brahman was all alone. He did not prosper, so he created the most excellent kshatra. Still he did not prosper, so he created the Viś and, when he did not prosper even then, he created the śūdra varṇa. The gods are also placed within this framework. Agni alone is the representative of Brahman among the gods, as the brāhmaṇa is among men. Indra, Varuṇa, Soma, Rudra, Parjanya, Yama, Mṛtyu and Īśāna were created as the kshatra. The groups of gods like the Vasus, Rudras, Ādityas, Viśvedevas and Maruts were the Viś and Pūshan the Śūdra.[10]

Ranade has observed that "in this unorthodox theory we have the origin of the earthly caste-system on the pattern of the heavenly one, in the manner in which the ectypes in Plato's theory of Ideas are merely replicas of the archetypes."[11]

The Chāndogya shows that castes depended on the past deeds of a man. Those whose conduct had been good were quickly born as a brāhmaṇa, a kshatriya or a vaiśya, but those whose conduct had been evil were born as a dog, a hog or a cāṇḍāla.[12] This theory of birth, according to karma-phala, had developed and matured by the time of the Bhagavadgītā and the castes were allotted as a result of the good or bad deeds done in a previous birth.[13]

The stratification of society had its origin in the occupational pursuits followed by different groups of people. All primitive societies showed some kind of a class division. The fundamental needs of society were the moral and the spiritual, the military and the economic[14] and correspondingly there were people of learning and virtue, people of courage and valour and people who provided the economic needs. Vedic society had the brāhmaṇas who were law-givers, teachers and priests; the kshatriyas who were fighters and upholders of law; the vaiśyas who were given to agricultural, pastoral and other economic pursuits and the śūdras who comprised the servile class.

In the Ṛgveda this division was still primarily and chiefly

on an occupational basis. Generally, the sons followed their fathers' profession but the classes were not made hereditary, at least not rigidly so. For, people born to low parents could still be accepted as poets and seers. The cases of Kavasha, who was the son of a slave girl and Mahīdāsa Aitareya, born of a śūdrā mother, could be cited as examples.

The Brāhmaṇas show the transitional phase between the laxity of the Saṁhitā period and the rigidity of the post-Vedic period. Where there is talk of castes among the gods, trees, animals, and Vedic metres,[15] there is also the case of Śyāparṇa Sāyakāyana who thinks some of his sons could be kshatriyas, some brāhmaṇas and some even vaiśyas.[16]

The Upanishads show a continuity of this transitional phase. The Bṛhadāraṇyaka is quite definite about the origin and order of varṇas[17] but at the same time Satyakāma Jābāla, born of a śūdrā mother and an unknown father, is accepted as a disciple in the seminary of Hāridrumata Gautama.[18] The Chāndogya describes the three higher varṇas as the result of pious deeds[19] but at the same time the pious and benevolent king Jānaśruti is referred to as a śūdra, and a lowly person like Raikva, the cart-driver, as a brāhmaṇa.[20]

→ *The Brāhmaṇa*

The Purusha Sūkta described the brāhmaṇas as coming from the mouth of the Primeval Being.[21] Other stories about the origin of the caste system do not even distinguish between the Primeval Being and the priestly class, both of which are known by the term Brahman. "Brahman alone was there in the beginning. He did not fare well, therefore, he created the most excellent power kshatra."[22]

The brāhmaṇas played a very important role in the sacrificial system. There were four chief priests: *Hotā*, *Udgatā*, *Adhvaryu* and *Brahmā*[23] and many others to assist them. There were Prastotā, Pratihartā, Praśāsta, Pratiprashṭhātā, Brāhmaṇācchamsī, Acchāvāk, Neshṭā, Āgnīdhra, Grāvastuta, Netā, Unnetā, Śaptā and many others besides. Like Agni among the devas, the brāhmaṇas alone among men were empowered to act as an intermediary between the sacrificer and the gods.[24] They were the human gods and were to be

propitiated with *dakshiṇā*, which consisted of not only monetary gains but also high moral principles like austerity, almsgiving, uprightness, non-violence and truthfulness.[25] The kshatriyas and the vaiśyas also came under the category of *Yajñīyas*, those who could perform sacrifices, but it was only the brāhmaṇas who actually wielded the sacrificial ladle. It was their exclusive privilege to partake of the sacrificial oblations and ritually prepared Soma. They alone were called *Hutāda* and *Somapā*.[26]

The brāhmaṇas were devoted to the cause of learning. Their period of self-study stretched to a life time. Whatever else they might be doing, whether they were staying at the teacher's place as brahmacārins or establishing their own study centres, they were always expected to continue with their studies.[27] There were people who remained wandering in quest of knowledge throughout their lives.[28] Such was their devotion to the cause that they were prepared to subdue their natural pride in their birth and profession and obtain knowledge from their social inferiors.[29]

After finishing his term of study, the student repaid his teacher, to some extent, by becoming a junior teacher or Upādhyāya. But later, after graduation, he established his own school. The tie of affection between the teachers and the students was not cut off even when the latter had paid his dues and gone away. The Taittirīya Graduation-address asks the students to bring money which is pleasing to the teacher but not to sever the thread of bonhomie.[30]

The brāhmaṇas became quite affluent by following the professions of priestcraft and teaching. There were *Mahāśāla* brāhmaṇas,[31] who, the commentators tell us, had a hundred or more students living under their roof. Uddālaka Āruṇi, by his own confession, had plenty of gold, cows, horses, slaves, attendants and apparel.[32] But this did not make the brāhmaṇas money-minded, because they imparted knowledge, free of cost, to those who could not afford to pay. To the teacher, all the students were the same, whether they paid for their keep or not. They all served the teacher by tending to his cows,[33] looking after his household fires,[34] gathering fuel and begging for food.[35]

The brāhmaṇas, being the guardians of the young, were

specially answerable for their ethical and moral values. They were models of good conduct for others to emulate. The Taittirīya enumerates their virtues as Ṛta, Svādhyāya-Pravacana—study and teaching, truth, self-control, tranquillity, the sacrificial fires, the household fires, hospitality, humanity and propagation of the race.[36] The study of the Vedas and the knowledge of Brahman made a brāhmaṇa perfect. Uddālaka tells his son that there was no one in their family who did not study and was a brāhmaṇa only by birth.[37] Hāridrumata Gautama implies that only a brāhmaṇa can speak truth even at his own cost.[38]

It was due to these high principles and their special prerogative to act as priests that the brāhmaṇas were held in very high esteem in the society. Homicide was a grave crime, but more so when the deceased was a brāhmaṇa.[39] Even cuckolding a śrotriya brāhmaṇa waṣ past redemption.[40] One who injured a brāhmaṇa struck at his own source; he became laden with sins as if he had killed all his good works with his own hands.[41] The learned brāhmaṇas were venerated by the kings. The kings not only got down from their thrones when some such scholar approached them[42] but also brought him a seat and *Arghya* with their own hands.[43] They addressed him with the utmost respect as Bhagavan,[44] the only exception being Yājñavalkya, who is called by name by the Videhan king Janaka.[45] But this was probably due to Yājñavalkya's being a junior contemporary of the king. If by some oversight on the part of the householder, a brāhmaṇa guest remained unwelcomed, he took away the hope and expectation, friendship and joy, sacrifices and good works, sons, cattle and all.[46]

The brāhmaṇas acted as priests in anointing the king in the Rājasūya or Vājapeya sacrifices. They even took a lower seat than the king-elect[47] but they proclaimed to the people—"This is your king, Soma is the king of us—brāhmaṇas."[48] The texts often tell us that a brāhmaṇa could do without the king, but the king could not flourish without a brāhmaṇa.[49] Theoretically, the king could oppress a brāhmaṇa,[50] but in actual fact, there were far too many curses invoked on the head of the oppressor of the brāhmaṇas, for one to try and face the dire consequences.[51]

The Kshatriya

The kshatriyas were born from the arms of the Primeval Being[52] and represented the brawn of society. It does not mean that they were denied the brains, for many a king is seen establishing his intellectual superiority over the brāhmaṇas, who were the brainy ones. The Bṛhadāraṇyaka shows them being born right after Brahman realized that he did not prosper alone. The kshatra power was proclaimed to be the most excellent one, beyond which there was nothing.[53]

The Upanishads are lacking in details regarding the true function of the kshatriyas, i.e. fighting and upholding the law. The concept of world-conquerors had changed. Instead of winning the nations with valour and fighting, the kings were devoting their energies to pursuits of peace. They were indulging in philosophical speculations[54] and bountiful benevolence.[55] Only the Maitrāyaṇī lists the great wielders of the bow, the Cakravartins like Sudyumna, Bhūridyumna, Indradyumna, etc.[56] The Kaushītaki mentions Pratardana Daivodāsi, who reached the beloved abode of Indra through fighting and strength.[57]

The kshatriyas were entitled to the sacred thread and consequently the sacred knowledge. They could instigate sacrifices and were raised to temporary brāhmaṇa-hood and god-hood, during the performance of the ceremony.[58] They were the Yajamānas, who paid the brāhmaṇa priests for their pains[59] and for whom the priests secured a place in heaven or Brahma-loka.[60] They shared the drinking of Soma with the brāhmaṇas but could not eat the oblations.[61]

The kshatriyas had access to Vedic and Upanishadic learning, as apparent from the description of Janaka Vaideha as one who has studied the Vedas and to whom the Upanishads have been spoken.[62] They were well-versed in Udgītha,[63] and some of them had become famous for evolving a new line of philosophical thinking.[64] Still, it was unusual for a kshatriya to act as teacher to the brāhmaṇas. The Bṛhadāraṇyaka tells us that it is contrary to the established norms that a brāhmaṇa should come to a kshatriya for knowledge.[65] But there were some branches of learning which were exclusively kshatriya-oriented and had never been given to a brāhmaṇa.[66] The trend continued till the Bhaga-

vadgītā which gives the line of the Rājarshis,[67] who had the most secret *Rājavidyā*.[68]

The brāhmaṇas did not acknowledge the supremacy of the kshatriya king, even at the time of the coronation. They accepted only Soma as their king.[69] But they had to humble their pride and go to the kshatriya with fuel in hand when the latter defeated them at their own game.[70] Whatever their relationship might be with each other, to the commoner they presented a united front. In the Madhu-graha ceremony of the Vājapeya, the Adhvaryu presented one cup each to a kshatriya and a vaiśya and in doing so imbued the kshatriya with truth, prosperity and light and smote the vaiśya with untruth, misery and darkness.[71] The kshatriya collected tax from the commoner and this right had the sanction of the brāhmaṇas.[72] But this did not make them thoughtless oppressors. They were as much aware of their duties as their rights. It was the duty of the king and his retinue to look after the interests of the people, to protect them from outside invasions and maintain the law and order situation within. The Chāndogya Upanishad shows the king of the Kurus performing a sacrifice for the well-being of his drought-hit subjects.[73] Jānaśruti feels slighted upon hearing that there is someone who is more generous than him, for, he himself took pride in being famed as a pious giver, bestowing much wealth upon the people and always keeping an open house, building places of refuge everywhere, so that people could eat his food.[74] Aśvapati is proud to note that his kingdom is free of vices and misery.[75]

The Vaiśya

The vaiśya or the viś class comprised the commonalty. Born from the thighs of the Primeval Being,[76] the viś represented the bulk of society. It was created after the kshatra in the Bṛhadāraṇyaka story of creation.[77] Its position in society did not depend on brains or brawn like the brāhmaṇas or the kshatriyas, but in numbers. Even the vaiśya gods are not the mighty ones like Indra, Varuṇa, etc. but those who are grouped together like the Vasus, Rudras, Ādityas, Viśvedevas and Maruts.[78]

The birth of a vaiśya is called a good one[79] but he is said

to be one who pays tax to another, is lived on by another and can be oppressed or enslaved at will.[80] The Kaushītaki Upanishad tells us that the king is one of the five mouths of Soma-Candramas, with which he eats the viśas.[81]

The Upanishads do not know of any vaiśyas, but other sources tell us that although lower than the brāhmaṇa and the kshatriya in the bid for social ascendancy, the vaiśyas were definitely higher than the śūdra or the cāṇḍāla. The vaiśyas were entitled to be initiated and eligible to perform sacrifices but they did not partake of the oblations or Soma.[82] The brāhmaṇa and kshatriya were at one in keeping the viś at a distance. Brāhmaṇa texts abound in such references where the kshatriya is allowed the upper hand.[83]

The vaiśyas looked after the economic aspect of life. They cultivated fields, reared cattle and other animals and speculated in trade. Various craftsmen, the metal workers, the weavers, the potter and the wheeler came under the category of the vaiśyas. One more lucrative and important profession was that of the money-lender and trader, vaṇik or śreshṭhin.[84] The intermingling of various occupations and callings produced a number of mixed castes—varṇa-saṁkara—in the Sūtra period.

It might be noted in passing that the vaiśyas were given more importance by the upcoming heterodox sects, which needed their monetary support and gave them exalted positions in return. From the Buddhist and Jaina sources we know of wealthy merchants who made it possible for the new sects to run costly establishments and in return, they were treated with more respect and honour than they could have had from the priesthood.

The Śūdra

The śūdras were born from the feet of the Primeval Being.[85] Brahman created them after the kshatriyas and the vaiśyas.[86] They were specifically brought forth to serve the other three. The Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa tells us that the brāhmaṇas were born from the devas and the śūdras from the asuras.[87] This lends support to the supposition that the śūdras primarily included the non-Aryan indigenous element, known as Dāsa or Dasyu in the Ṛgveda. All those living outside the pale

of Vedic culture, as also the mixed castes were also known by the general term śūdras.[88]

The Brāhmaṇa texts present them in a contemptuous light. They were not eligible to the sacred thread, nor to performing sacrifices. They were not to enter the sacrificial arena, not to speak to the initiated and not to milk the sacrificial cows.[89]

The Upanishads give some privileges to a śūdra's son. Satyakāma was initiated by a teacher even after his confessed ignorance about his father and *gotra*.[90] Not only that, he later established his own seminary, had a wife and several students who tended to the household fires.[91] He was accepted by a magnificent line of teachers, glowing with such luminaries as Uddālaka, Yājñavalkya and Madhuka Paiṅgya.[92] He had even been to the court of the Videhas.[93]

Howsoever well life might have treated Satyakāma Jābāla, it speaks much about the pitiable condition of the śūdras to note that a young girl was left with child while serving many people.[94] The term śūdra was used derogatively, as evident from the Chāndogya passage, where Raikva addresses the king as a 'Śūdra'.[95] The Maitrāyaṇī goes even so far as to term as thieves and unworthy of heaven those who are the disciples of the śūdras and also those who, although śūdras, are learned in the scriptures.[96]

The cāṇḍālas are also looked down upon. The Chāndogya puts the birth of a cāṇḍāla at par with a dog and a hog.[97] The same text tells us that if a person gives away the remainder of his food to the cāṇḍāla, even that is offered to his Vaiśvānara self.[98] Thus, cāṇḍāla was apparently the lowest position in society.

Āśrama

As the four varṇas divided the society into four different classes, so did the Āśramas divide the individual's life-span into four different categories. The Upanayana or initiation ceremony marked the beginning of the first stage, that of the Brahmacārin. It was the period of study and refraining from the pleasures. After it, came the stage of the householder, the mainstay of society. It was the period when the household fires were kept burning, sacrifices were performed and sages,

priests and guests were offered hospitality. Then followed the stage of the Vānaprasthin, when having lived life to the full, the householder retired to the forest for meditation and contemplation. Later still came the stage of the Saṁnyāsin, when a person renounced all earthly possessions forever and strove for the realization of Brahman.

These four stages were connected with the four classes of Vedic literature at a considerably later date. Thus, the brahmacārin resided with the preceptor and studied the Saṁhitā section. The gṛhastha performed the sacrifices in accordance with the rules set out in the Brāhmaṇa texts. The vānaprasthin performed symbolic worship in the forests, as explained by the Āraṇyakas. The saṁnyāsin, having freed himself from all desires, possessions and attachments, spent his days in uninterrupted contemplation of Brahman. He no longer needed any material articles or even mental symbols of worship. The Upanishads were generally intended for such people. "Thus, the sages arranged Vedic literature to conform to the four stages of life."[99]

The matter is not as simple as it looks. By the time of the composition of the Upanishads, the Āśramas were not yet crystallized into a set pattern. The Upanishads sometimes refer to three and sometimes to four divisions, which clearly indicates that the demarcating line between the third and fourth stages was not clearly defined as yet. The Upanishadic references do not make it clear whether the stages were followed one after another in succession or whether the stages of the vānaprasthin or saṁnyāsin could be reached directly after that of the brahmacārin. On the other hand, Vedic literature, although divided into four distinctive categories, shows a lot of overlapping and intermingling of the contents. The Saṁhitā part already showed points to ponder on. The Brāhmaṇas speculated on the origin of the universe and hinted at the existence of Ātman and Brahman. The Āraṇyakas wavered between extreme ritualism and extreme renunciation. The Upanishads, although not believing in the efficacy of rituals, still went on prescribing ceremonies for punishing rivals or for acquiring the desired offspring. All this goes on to show that any connection between the four stages of life and the four classes of the Vedic literature is entirely coincidental and not

intentional on the part of the authors or compilers.

The Upanishads establish the existence of the orders of the brahmacārin and the gṛhastha, beyond doubt, while the orders of the vānaprasthin and the saṁnyāsin are also hinted at. The Chāndogya mentions the three branches of dharma as—

(1) sacrifice, study and almsgiving,
(2) austerity, and
(3) to dwell at the house of the teacher, leading a life of a celibate, controlling desires.

It is said that all these obtain the world of the virtuous, but the *brahma-saṁstha* alone obtains immortality.[100]

The passage clearly refers to the institute of the house-holder, who performed the sacrifices, practised charity and kept on the tradition of self-study, prescribed elsewhere also.[101] The second stage seems to be that of the recluse, who lived in the forest and observed penance and austerity. The third stage is unmistakably that of a brahmacārin, who dwelt at the house of the teacher and abstained from pleasures. The term brahma-saṁstha hints at the stage of the saṁnyāsin, who renounced all earthly possession, in order to be firmly established in the meditations of Brahman. Thus, all the four stages are contemplated, but the order is not the usual one, with the student coming after the hermit.

In the Bṛhadāraṇyaka, Yājñavalkya explains the way to know Brahman as leading from learning to children, from children to being a Muni or silent meditator and from meditation to being a Brāhmaṇa or knower of Brahman.[102] Again, it is said that the person who, without knowing the imperishable Brahman, offers oblations, performs sacrifices or practises austerities his work has an end, but he who knows it becomes a Brāhmaṇa.[103] These two passages hint at a fourfold and a threefold division respectively.

The Chāndogya tells us that the person who, living in the forests, practises faith and austerity, goes to the path of the gods whereas the person who, living in the village, performs sacrifice and works of public utility and practises charity goes to the path of the manes.[104] This clearly indicates the existence of the forest-dwelling recluse and the householder living

in the village. The Bṛhadāraṇyaka mentions different classes of ascetics as Paulkasa, Śramana and Tāpasa.[105]

It seems all four stages had come into existence by the time of the composition of the later Upanishads. The Śvetāśvatara Upanishad is spoken to a group of *Atyāśramins*,[106] which might be taken to mean the people 'who were in the last or best of the āśramas', or those 'who were above the āśramas'. But, the word proves the formulation of the āśrama-theory. By the time of the Maitrāyaṇī Upanishad the idea was fairly well-developed, with duties and rights more or less clearly defined.[107]

Brahmacarya

The first stage of life was that of a brahmacārin. When a person put his childhood behind him, he was invested with the sacred thread and thereupon began a life of study. He was initiated by a worthy teacher, with whom he resided and learnt one or more of the Vedas. The usual term lasted twelve years, although the Upanishads mention one-year or thirty-two-year-long terms as well. The six questioners of the Praśna Upanishad spent a year at the āśrama of the sage Pippalāda, before their queries were answered.[108] Indra lived with Prajāpati for one hundred and one years (three terms of thirty-two years each and one of five years) before he was satisfied.[109] The students of Satyakāma Jābāla, however, were discharged at the end of twelve years.[110] Generally, the initiation ceremony took place at the age of twelve. Twelve years of preparation and the next twelve years of study amounted to twenty-four years, when the brahmacārin left his studentship behind and returned home. Śvetaketu went to a gurukula at the age of twelve and came back when he was twenty-four years of age.[111] Max Müller has commented that this was rather late, for the son of a brāhmaṇa could be initiated at the age of seven, according to Āpastamba.[112] But twelve, rather than seven, seems to have been the usual age of initiation, since the first twenty-four years of a man's life are grouped together as the morning libation, belonging to the Vasus.[113]

The student approached the teacher humbly and formally, with fuel in hand.[114] The teacher selected his students and

initiated them into the secrets of Vedic knowledge. Sometimes the training started immediately or the very next day[115] and sometimes even after spending the full term of twelve years the teacher did not teach them.[116] It depended on the capacity of the student and the inclination of the teacher.

The student, while residing at the gurukula, treated the teacher and his family with utmost respect. He attended to the cattle and the household fires of his teacher and begged for his teacher's and his own food.[117] Thus, it was not only the period of learning the scriptures but also learning high principles like humbleness, truthfulness, abstinence and faith. The student was to have total faith in his teacher,[118] who was his father.[119] All the good works were considered to have been performed for one who adhered to his vow of celibacy, for, what people call Yajña, Ishṭa, Sattrāyaṇa, Mauna, Anāśakāyana and Āraṇyāyana are all nothing but brahmacarya and by following brahmacarya these are obtained.[120]

After completing his sojourn at the gurukula, the student had his graduation in the form of a ceremonial bath, which freed him from the restrictions and taboos of studentship. After having the bath, the brahmacārin was called a *Snātaka*, and could return to his parental home. The parting advice of the teacher is recorded in the Taittirīya Upanishad and serves as a guideline to the prospective householder to date:

"Say what is true. Do thy duty. Do not neglect the study of the Veda. After having brought to thy teacher his proper reward, do not cut off the line of children. Do not swerve from the truth. Do not neglect greatness. Do not neglect the learning and teaching of the Veda. Do not neglect the works due to the gods and manes. Let thy mother be to thee like unto a god. Let thy father be to thee like unto a god. Let thy teacher be to thee like unto a god. Let thy guest be to thee like unto a god. Whatever actions are blameless, those should be regarded, not others. Whatever good works have been performed by us, those should be observed by thee, not others. And there are some brāhmaṇas better than us, they should be comforted by thee by giving them a seat. Whatever is given, should be given with faith, not without faith, with joy, with modesty, with fear, with kindness. If

there should be any doubt in thy mind with regard to any sacred act or with regard to conduct, in that case conduct thyself as brāhmaṇas, who possess good judgement, conduct themselves therein, whether they be appointed or not, as long as they are not too severe but devoted to duty. And with regard to things that have been spoken against, as brāhmaṇas who possess good judgement conduct themselves therein, whether they be appointed or not . . . thus conduct thyself. This is the rule. This is the teaching. This is the true Upanishad of the Veda. This is the command. Thus should you observe, thus should this be observed."[121]

Gārhasthya

The order of the householder was the firm basis on which the other orders depended. The student, the recluse and the ascetic, all performed their respective duties without a hitch, since the householder performed his duties of sacrificing and almsgiving and looked after their creature comforts.

After spending the term of study at the gurukula, the young person returned to his own house, married and settled down. The Chāndogya says—

He, who has learnt the Veda from a family of teachers, according to the sacred rule, in the leisure hours left from working for the teacher, who after having been discharged has settled in his own house, keeping up the memory of what he has learnt by repeating regularly at some sacred spot, who has begotten virtuous sons, and concentrated all his senses on the Self, never giving pain to any creature, except at the *Tīrthas*, he who behaves thus all his life, reaches the world of Brahman and does not return.[122]

The duties of a householder have been enunciated in the Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upanishad. When a person performs sacrifices, he pleases the gods; when he recites the Vedas, he pleases the seers; when he makes offerings and desires children, he pleases the manes; when he offers food and shelter to men, he pleases the men; when he gives fodder and water to the animals, he pleases them; when he provides for the pets, birds and even the insects, he pleases them.[123] This shows that not only men and animals but even the gods, seers and manes depended on the householder for their sustentation.

A man needed a wife by his side to make him complete, because husband and wife were like two sides of a split pea.[124] Her cooperation was essential for the performance of sacrifices. A wife was held in very high esteem by her own rights but more so when she gave birth to a son.[125] The fulfilment of a man was in having a wife who would give him children and in having enough money to perform the rites.[126]

The son was very highly thought of. A man's duties towards his forebears were considered to be discharged when he had sons.[127] Having learned, long-living and obedient sons stood as the most important achievement in the Upanishadic scheme of things.[128] Whatever was left undone by the father, the son exonerated him from all that. The father lived on in the form of his son.[129] The daughter was also a welcome addition to the family and not the burden she was thought of in later times.[130]

The household consisted of the immediate family, i.e. the man, his wife and children and also the brothers, cousins, their children, attendants, servants, cattle, horses and pets. People were anxious to have as many persons living under their roof as possible. "Growing in this home of mine may I maintain a thousand people."[131] The position of the head of the family, the *gṛhapati*, was one of great responsibility. When he had to go out for a few days, he left someone, preferably an elder son, in charge. He resumed his responsibilities on return.[132]

The guests were to be looked after in a proper and befitting manner. They were like gods on the earth,[133] specially a brāhmaṇa guest, who was to be appeased with water, for Agni himself entered the house as a brāhmaṇa guest. If a brāhmaṇa guest remained in the house without receiving food, he destroyed all hopes and expectations, possessions, righteousness, sacred and good deeds and all the sons and cattle.[134]

The householder was supposed to perform sacrifices, works of public welfare and charity.[135] The Chāndogya ascribes Yajña, Adhyayana and Dāna as the characteristic duties of the householder.[136] The Taittirīya elaborates upon them. It prescribes Ṛta, Satya, Tapas, Dama, Śama, the fires, the offerings, the guests, humanity, the offspring and propagation of the race, with great emphasis on *Svādhyāya-pravacana*, self-

study and teaching.[137] The householder is constantly reminded not to swerve from the path of Truth and Dharma and not to neglect study of the Veda. He was to treat his mother, father, teacher and guest as he would treat a god.[138] If one said anything unbecoming to a father, mother, brother, sister, tutor or a brāhmaṇa, then people said, "Shame on thee! thou hast offended thy father, mother, brother, sister, teacher or brāhmaṇa."[139]

After reaching a ripe old age, the householder relinquished his charge and went to live in the forest.[140] He entrusted all his possessions to the eldest son, formally and ceremonially, in the going-away ceremony.[141] If perchance he did not go to the forest after the handing over, but had to remain in the house, he lived under the authority of the son.[142]

Vānaprastha

When a man had enjoyed the state of marital bliss, performing his prescribed duties of sacrificing, almsgiving and public welfare, he was free to follow the course of Vānaprasthin, the forest-dwelling recluse. The Smṛtis give the precise age for going to the forest as when a man has seen his grandchildren or when his hair have become grey or the skin wrinkled.[143] The Jābālopanishad tells us that the order of the Vānaprasthin could be taken up directly after the student-hood or after spending some years as a householder.[144] It can be inferred from a passage in the Chāndogya[145] that the usual practice was to spend forty-four years as a householder, before going to the forest. The first twenty-four years are called the morning and the next forty-four years the mid-day. Therefore, it seems likely that it was not before the age of sixty-eight that a man thought of going to the araṇya.

The Bṛhadāraṇyaka mentions Yājñavalkya anxious to go away from the state of the householder.[146] He is desirous of having his possessions distributed between his two wives. The Maitrāyaṇī shows king Bṛhadratha leaving for the forest after having established his son in the kingdom and having reached the state of non-attachment.[147]

Dwelling in the forest, observing silence and keeping fasts occur together in the Chāndogya Upanishad.[148] The same text gives faith and austerity as the characteristic traits of the

forest-dweller as against the performance of sacrifices, works of public welfare and charity practised by the village people.[149] Another version of the same story gives Śraddhā and Satya as connected with the recluse.[150]

The Bṛhadāraṇyaka shows that when a man, having conquered the lust for offspring, wealth and the world, lives by begging, he is termed a Muni.[151] The Muṇḍaka Upanishad, meant primarily for the people in the third and fourth stage of life, gives some more details about the Vānaprasthin. "Those who practise austerity and faith, who are tranquil and learned and who live in the forest by begging, they depart through the door of the sun to the immortal, imperishable person."[152]

Scholars have tried to analyse the causes of the popularity of the order of the recluse. It seems the non-believers had already made their appearance in the Ṛgveda,[153] but by the time of the Upanishads they had been incorporated into the Vedic tradition as forest-dwellers and ascetics. Shastri believes in the coexistence of the Ṛshi tradition of the Aryans and the Muni tradition of the non-Aryans, which blended together to give the Āraṇyakas and Upanishads their present form.[154] The Muni tradition found its way into Aryan society by being accepted as the order of the recluse. Thus, it would seem that the Āśramas, specially the last two, were constituted to accommodate the 'inquisitive' and 'protestant' forest hermits and wandering ascetics into the Upanishadic society.[155] Their thinking was also accepted with some modifications, as evident from Yājñavalkya's discourses to Janaka.[156]

On the other hand, it has been discussed that asceticism was a perfectly logical outcome of the Vedic tradition itself. When a man felt the interest of life waning, he saw the necessity of harbouring ascetic virtues.[157] It was not escaping from the world but emancipating a man from the cares and encumbrances of worldly passions and possessions and enabling him to pursue serious contemplation.[158]

Saṁnyāsa

The fourth and last stage is merely hinted at in the earliest Upanishads. The oft-quoted passage of the Chāndogya, which gives three branches of Dharma, refers to the existence of a fourth branch, that of the Brahma-saṁstha, who alone

obtained immortality.[159] The first three branches tally with the orders of the householder, the recluse and the student. It only requires the ascetic or saṁnyāsin to complete the picture of the four Āśramas. The *brahma-saṁstha* comes closest. Elsewhere also the term *brāhmaṇa* seems to convey the sense of a person who has risen above the mundane ambitions of a householder and also the silence and penance of a recluse.[160]

The Bṛhadāraṇyaka shows Yājñavalkya eager to renounce the state of the householder.[161] The word used in this context is derived from the root *Vraj*, with *pra* prefix added to it. Other derivatives—Pravrajyā and Pravrājaka—denoted the specific sense of saṁnyāsa and saṁnyāsin respectively, in the later times. There is mention of Śramana and Tāpasa too in the same text, both making their first appearance here.[162] These, together with the name Muṇḍaka, hint at the order of the ascetic becoming increasingly popular in the Upanishads.

The term Saṁnyāsa is mentioned for the first time in the Muṇḍaka Upanishad. The verse describes the Yatis or ascetics as those who have ascertained well the meaning of Vedānta knowledge, who have purified their natures through saṁnyāsa-yoga, the path of renunciation. They, dwelling in the Brahmaloka, at the end of time, being one with the immortal, are all liberated.[163] The same text tells us that Ātman cannot be achieved by austerity without aim.[164] The word *aliṅga* which qualifies *Tapas*, has been equated with saṁnyāsa without outward badges by Śaṅkara. He explains liṅga as the outward signs of an ascetic, like his robes, shaven head, etc. on the basis of a verse from the Mahābhārata. However, the Upanishads also knew about the outward marks of a mendicant. The Maitrāyaṇi knows of people who decked themselves out in saffron robes, earrings and skulls.[165]

This leads one to infer that although the distinction between the vānaprasthin and the saṁnyāsin was not very well-marked to begin with, yet faith, austerity and truth were gradually becoming the hallmarks of the vānaprasthin[166] whereas the saṁnyāsin could be discerned from his renunciation of the world and the works, as also the outward signs like the saffron robe and shaven head.[167] His one aim in life was to realize Brahman and attain the Brahmaloka from where there was no return.

Saṁskāra

The Saṁskāras or sacraments were the purificatory domestic rites covering the whole span of a man's life, from before birth to after death. There were about forty such sacraments, not all of which were performed for everybody, but some of them most certainly were performed. These included the Jātakarma, Cūḍākarma, Upanayana, Samāvartana, Vivāha and Śmaśāna-kṛtya or Mṛta-deha-saṁskāra. The Gṛhya Sūtras give details of these rites, some of which have infiltrated into the Upanishads as well.[168] The Bṛhadāraṇyaka and the Kaushītaki Upanishads offer some useful information about these rituals.

The Bṛhadāraṇyaka explains the sexual act as a kind of ritualistic performance.[169] There were ways and means to procure children or to avoid having them.[170] If a person wanted a fair-complexioned, well-read and long-living son, he was to have rice cooked with milk and eat it with clarified butter. If he wanted a tawny complexioned son, who would study two Vedas and have a long life, he was to have rice cooked in curds and eat it with clarified butter. For a dark-complexioned, red-eyed son, who studied three Vedas and had a long life, he was to have rice cooked in water and eat it with clarified butter. For a learned and long-living daughter one had to cook rice with sesamum and eat it with clarified butter. If one wished for a son who was learned, famous, a frequenter of assemblies, a speaker of delightful words, who would study all the Vedas and would attain a full term of life, one was to have rice cooked with meat and eat it with clarified butter.[171] There were hymns to be repeated at the time of conception and of parturition.[172]

When a son is born, after having prepared the fire, after having taken the baby in his lap and having put curds and clarified butter in a bronze cup, one made an oblation again and again, saying 'May I increase in this son and nourish a thousand in my house. May fortune never depart from his line with offspring and cattle. Hail. I offer to you mentally the vital forces that are in me. Whatever in my work I have done too much or whatever I have done too little, let Agni, the all-knowing, the beneficent, make it fit and good for us. Hail.' Then putting one's mouth near the child's right ear, one said

thrice, 'Speech, speech, speech!' Then, mixing curds, honey and clarified butter one fed him out of a spoon of gold, saying "I place in you the heaven. I place in you the atmosphere. I place in you the heaven. I place in you everything; earth, atmosphere and heaven." Then one gave him a name, saying, 'You are Veda.' So, this became his secret name.[173]

These two ceremonies were known as the Āyushyakarma and the Medhājanana. After these the infant was presented to its mother for suckling, saying, 'Your breast which is unfailing and refreshing, wealthy, abundant, generous with which you nourish all worthy beings, O Sarasvati! give it here (to my wife for my child) to suck from.'[174]

Many other ceremonies like the Jātakarma, Cūḍākarma, etc. which were performed in childhood, do not find mention in the Upanishads. Even the most important one, the Upanayana ceremony, marking the beginning of studenthood, is only obliquely referred to.[175] The Gṛhya Sūtras and the Smṛtis offer very elaborate details about the right age, the type of cloth and girdle to be used, the kind of wood to be adopted for making the staff as also the correct procedure to be adopted.

The Samāvartana ceremony, marking the end of studenthood, is again not described in detail in any of the principal Upanishads, but mention is made of the time when a young man, after completing the term of study at the gurukula, took his leave of the teacher.[176] There was a ceremonial bath at the time, which proclaimed that the student had become a *Snātaka*, literally one who had taken his bath, signifying his graduation. The teacher's parting advice to the young man was a masterpiece of worldly wisdom and high moral standards, and has already been mentioned in connection with the stage of brahmacarya.[177]

The actual ceremony of marriage is not given in the Upanishads but there are enough references to prove the sanctity of the institution. Yājñavalkya is believed to have said that a man was only one half of a split pea, incomplete without his other self. It is the wife who fills this space, she is the one who saves the man from fear and boredom. She was created because even Brahman could not remain alone and needed companionship.[178] We have evidence of the practice of polygamy

and hypergamy in Yājñavalkya having two wives and the brāhmaṇa Raikva marrying the daughter of the kshatriya king Jānaśruti.[179] Later literature grants that a brāhmaṇa could marry a girl from his own varṇa and also one each from the kshatriya and the vaiśya varṇa. The kshatriya could have a kshatriya and a vaiśya wife but could not have a brāhmaṇa one. The vaiśya could have a vaiśya wife and all three varṇas could have a śūdrā wife as well. Polyandry was not common, though the word *Sapatna,* rival, seems to indicate that either women were allowed to have more than one husbands at a time or they indulged in extra-marital affairs. The Bṛhadāraṇyaka knows of rivals[180] and has spells to destroy the wife's lover.[181]

The Kaushītaki Upanishad prescribes a ceremony for the time when a man, who has been away from home, returns. On coming back he should smell his son's head, saying—'You are born from every limb of mine. You are born from the heart. You, my son, are my self indeed, May you live a hundred autumns.' He gives him his name, saying, 'Be you a stone, be you an axe, be you everywhere desired gold. You, my son, are light indeed. May you live a hundred autumns.' He takes his name. Then he embraces him, saying, 'Even as Prajāpati embraced his creatures for their welfare so do I embrace you.' Then he mutters in his right ear, saying, 'Confer on him, O Maghavan, O onrusher', and whispers in his left ear, 'O Indra, bestow the most excellent possessions. Do not cut off (the line of our race). Be not afraid, live a hundred autumns of life. I smell your head, O son, with your name.' Thrice he should smell. 'I make a lowing over you with the lowing (sound) of cows.' He should make a lowing over his head thrice.[182]

When a man thinks he is 'about to depart', he performs the *Sampratti* or *Sampradāna* ceremony. The Bṛhadāraṇyaka says "when a man thinks that he is about to depart, he says to his son, 'You are Brahman, you are the sacrifice and you are the world.' The son answers 'I am Brahman, I am the sacrifice, I am the world.' "[183]

The Kaushītaki Upanishad describes the ceremony in greater detail—

The father, when about to depart, calls his son. Having strewn the house with fresh grass, having built up the fire,

having placed near it a vessel of water with a jug (full of rice), himself covered with a fresh garment, the father remains lying. The son, having come, approaches him from above, touching his organs with his organs or the father may transmit the tradition to him while he sits before him. Then he delivers over to him (thus):

The father: 'Let me place my speech in you'.
The son: 'I take your speech in me'.
The father: 'Let me place my vital breath in you'.
The son: 'I take your vital breath in me'.
The father: 'Let me place my eye in you'.
The son: 'I take your eye in me'.
The father: 'Let me place my ear in you'.
The son: 'I take your ear in me'.
The father: 'Let me place my tastes of food in you'.
The son: 'I take your tastes of food in me'.
The father: 'Let me place my deeds in you'.
The son: 'I take your deeds in me'.
The father: 'Let me place my pleasure and pain in you'.
The son: 'I take your pleasure and pain in me'.
The father: 'Let me place my bliss, enjoyment and procreation in you'.
The son: 'I take your bliss, enjoyment and procreation in me'.
The father: 'Let me place my movement in you'.
The son: 'I take your movement in me'.
The father: 'Let me place my mind in you'.
The son: 'I take your mind in me'.
The father: 'Let me place my wisdom in you'.
The son: 'I take your wisdom in me'.

If, however, he should be unable to speak much, let the father say comprehensively, 'I place my vital breaths in you', and the son, 'I take your vital breaths in me'. Then turning to the right he goes forth towards the east. The father calls out after him, 'May fame, spiritual lustre and honour delight in you'. Then the son looks over his left shoulder. Having hidden his face with his hand or with the hem of his garment, he says, 'May you obtain heavenly worlds and all desires'.

If the father becomes well he should dwell under the authority of his son or wander about (as an ascetic). If, however, he departs, let them furnish him (with obsequies) as he ought to be furnished.[184]

When a man died his son performed the last rites for him, in order to smooth his path to heaven and to insure his happiness in the other world. The Ṛgveda mentions both burial and burning as equally popular methods for disposing of the dead. The Atharva Veda mentions two more alternatives but their exact sense is doubtful.[185] However, by the time of the Upanishads, the mode of burning of the dead had grown in frequency, as apparent from the Chāndogya Upanishad. It mentions the asuras decking out the dead body with what they have begged, with clothes and with ornaments and thinking that this will win the yonder world for the deceased.[186] The very fact that this practice has been attributed to the asuras who did not believe in the efficacy of charity, faith and sacrificing, goes on to prove that it had got restricted to a minority. Burning seems to have been the more usual practice.

The Īśa Upanishad says that this body ends in ashes.[187] The Bṛhadāraṇyaka tells us that after a man's death, the body is carried to the forest and there it is burnt in the fire.[188] The Chāndogya also reports that when a man has departed, they carry him to the appointed place for the fire (the funeral pyre).[189] The same text describes that when the life breath has departed from the body, one shoves even one's own father, mother, sister or brother with a poker and burns up every bit of them.[190]

A dying man's prayer, recorded in the Īśa Upanishad, invokes Agni to lead on to wealth by a good path.[191] Elsewhere, the seven moving tongues of fire are supposed to lead a person from this world to the other where the one lord of the gods abides.[192]

Food for the dead was offered periodically in sacrificial ceremonies. The offerings were of a different category than those offered to the gods. Whereas the gods were offered Havya, the manes were offered Kavya. The courier of both, Agni, had two distinct forms: one with which he bore the oblations to the gods, and the other with which he bore the funeral offerings to the manes, called *Kavya vāhana*.[193] The

Kaṭhopanishad mentions the Śrāddha period and also a *brahma-saṁsad*.[194] The two together hint at the later tradition of feeding the brāhmaṇas as the incarnations or representatives of the departed people, at a specific fortnight every year.

Women

Very few women make an appearance in the Upanishads. Among them are learned ones like Gārgī Vācaknavī, who could outshine many in an entirely male galaxy of thinkers[195] and Maitreyī who would rather have the means to realize the Self and become immortal than be the possessor of worldly wealth.[196] A contrast is offered by Kātyāyanī who possessed only such knowledge as women have.[197] The wife of Ushasti Cākrāyaṇa was living in Ibhyagrāma, begging for food, when the Kurus had been hit by the hailstorm, sharing her husband's poverty.[198] The wives of Yama and of Satyakāma Jābāla are seen reminding their husbands of their duties towards their guests and students.[199] The daughter of Jānaśruti Pautrāyaṇa willingly goes to Raikva, a mere cart-driver, when her father gives her away in marriage to Raikva for the services anticipated.[200] Then, there is the śūdrā maid-servant Jabālā, who gave birth to Satyakāma Jābāla and had the temerity and truthfulness to tell him that she was not aware of the identity of his father.[201] The name of Devakī is recorded along with her son Kṛshṇa.[202] The Bṛhadāraṇyaka provides us with a list of teachers known by their metronymics.[203]

As far as female deities and goddesses go, the Upanishads quote a few earlier verses on Sinīvāli, Sarasvatī, Śrī and Aditi.[204] Only one new goddess, Umā Haimavatī, makes her debut in the Kena Upanishad.[205]

Woman, according to the Upanishads, was created to make the man complete. Ātman was all alone in the beginning. He was afraid and had no delight. He desired a second. He became as large as a woman and a man in close embrace. He caused that self to fall into two parts. From that arose man and wife.[206]

This is an altogether different story from the one given in the Bible, "for Adam there was not found a help meet for him. And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon

Adam, and he slept and he took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh instead thereof. And the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman and brought her unto the man."[207]

The difference lies in the attitude towards woman. For the Upanishadic seer, woman was his own half, 'share and share alike', created to free him from fear and to give him delight. For the Biblical people she was merely an object of pleasure, made out of a dispensable rib of the body of the man.

The Upanishads often mention the female counterpart of philosophical ideas, *Vāk* is a female and *Prāṇa* the male, their coming together gives birth to the syllable *Om*.[208] Then again, the pair—*Rayi* and *Prāṇa*, were created in order to produce manifold offspring.[209]

The elevated position of the woman is also apparent from the fact that seeing a woman occurs as a good omen in the Chāndogya Upanishad. 'After performing the Mantha-rite, if a man sees a woman, let him know that his effort has reached fruition.'[210] She was not an unwanted baby. The Bṛhadāraṇyaka even prescribes a rite for procuring a long-living and scholarly daughter.[211] The ratio might differ, as there are rites for having three different kinds of sons as opposed to one daughter, but the desire to have a daughter was nonetheless present.

In their girlhood, women must have learnt household chores and acquired some smattering of education. Those of them who were of a more scholastic trend of mind, tried their hands at poetry and philosophy. The Ṛk Saṁhitā includes the work of quite a few poetesses like Ghoshā, Lopāmudrā, Apālā, etc.[212] and the Upanishads show the Brahmavādinīs, Maitreyī and Gārgī Vācaknavī.[213] Most of them, however, only had what Kātyāyanī is credited with, the knowledge which women have—*Strīprajñā*.[214] This must have included knowledge of cooking, cleaning, weaving, sewing, embroidery and looking after the household, for these arts have been, one way or the other, connected with women[215] throughout Vedic literature. Singing, dancing and playing musical instruments were additional accomplishments. The Kaṭhopanishad mentions women with musical instruments.[216] Moreover,

they had to have enough education to ensure correct enunciation of the Mantras and efficiency in sacrificial duties.

Marriage was a religious and social necessity for both men and women. A man was not entitled to perform a sacrifice unless he had a wife by his side.[217] The word *Patnī* denotes the wife's specific function of participating in the sacrifices, whereas *Jāyā* refers to her conjugal and social position. The earlier texts tell us that girls married late and had a say in the choice of husband.[218] But they also abided by the choice made by their fathers as is evident from the daughters of Śaryāta[219] and Jānaśruti[220] marrying to please their fathers.

The Taittirīya Upanishad describes the goddess Śrī bringing many useful things with her.[221] As Śrī has been identified with a woman elsewhere,[222] we are justified in replacing Śrī by a bride. She is asked to bring near and spread, to make garments for herself and for the groom, to bring cows, food and drink as also woolly animals. She became secure in the affection and honour lavished on her by the in-laws. She ruled her new household and became the mistress of the parents, brothers and unmarried sisters of her husband.[223]

A woman was to be wooed with words. Failing that she was to be bought with presents and if, even then, she did not give her consent, she was to be overcome by being beaten with a stick or one's own hand.[224] The wife is often addressed with endearments like *Priyā, Susīmā, Prithushtukā*, etc.[225]

The Upanishads prove the continuation of polygamy by showing Yājñavalkya with his two wives.[226] Elsewhere also, the term *bhāryā*, for wife, occurs in the plural.[227] There is no mention of polyandry, which again proves the continuity of the Brāhmaṇa practice, for the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa clearly enunciates that although there are many wives to a man, there never are many husbands to a woman.[228]

Hypergamy is to be found in Raikva's marriage to Jānaśruti's daughter.[229]

The fulfilment of a woman was in becoming the mother of a male child. It has been said that Prajāpati made woman to provide a firm abode for the seed of man.[230] A pregnant woman was to be carefully nurtured as she nurtured the child within her.[231] She was specially honoured on giving birth to a son. She was called Ilā and Maitrāvaruṇī and highly acclaim-

ed for bearing a brave son.[232] Her protection of her young had already become proverbial in the Praśna Upanishad.[233]

It has been said that women did not have any rights to property.[234] The Upanishads show the father handing over his entire property and tradition to the eldest son.[235] We know from Vedic evidence that the wife of the eldest son ruled over the household. She was his equal in status and the joint owner till the death of her husband.[236] But, after his death, she relinquished her rights. It was another matter when the husband intended to go away. When a person went to the forest as a hermit, his wife was free to follow him or stay at home, under the protection of her son. Yājñavalkya seems to be anxious to distribute his possessions between his two wives.[237] If this means that women had rights of inheritance and possession, then it would be a solitary example.

The Upanishads give no indication of the political standing of the womenfolk. Sharma has tried to establish that due to the influence of matriarchy, women not only attended the earliest tribal assembly—Vidatha—but also spoke at it. With the establishment of patriarchy, women lost their importance. Still, at the time of the Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa three of the twelve Ratnins were women, thereby constituting one-fourth of those whose voice counted in the consecration of the king.[238]

The religious and moral duties of the women included performing sacrifice by the side of her husband, tending the fires in his absence, caring for the family, attendants and pupils and looking after their creature comforts and making the husband mindful of his shortcomings.[239]

Education

It can be gleaned from the Upanishads that there were three different levels of education.[240] Primary education was given at home until the age of seven, eight or twelve years. The Chāndogya shows that the secondary level started at the age of twelve.[241] Thus, from twelve to twenty-four was the period of brahmacarya, when the pupil resided at the teacher's place and studied Vedic lore, the Vedāṅgas and other subjects, had practical training in priestcraft and cultivated high moral values. The still higher level of education

was intended for those who did not enter the stage of householder immediately after graduation, but meant to devote the greater part of their life to the cause of learning. They either remained at the gurukula for further and deeper study, e.g. Indra spent a hundred and one years at the place of Prajāpati,[242] or became wanderers imbibing knowledge from whereever they found it, e.g. Uddālaka Āruṇi who traversed the entire length and breadth of the Aryāvarta, from Madra to Videha, for the sake of knowledge.[243] These were known as *Naishṭhika* brahmacārins or *Carakas*.[244] Explaining the latter term, Śaṅkara writes, 'those who are called Carakas because they have taken a vow till the completion of their studies.'[245] The word reminds one of the schools of specialization in particular recensions of the Vedic texts, called the *Caraṇas*.

The syllabus of study, for the formal period of education, included the Vedas, Itihāsa-Purāṇa, Vidyā, Upanishads, Ślokas, Anuvyākhyānas, and Vyākhyānas.[246] There were also the six Vedāṅgas—Śikshā, Kalpa, Vyākaraṇa, Nirukta, Chandas, Jyotisha.[247] A more comprehensive list mentions Vedānām Veda, Pitrya, Rāśi, Daiva, Nidhi, Vākovākya, Ekāyana, Devavidyā, Brahmavidyā, Bhūtavidyā, Kshatravidyā, Nakshatra-vidyā, Sarpa-vidyā and Devajanavidyā.[248]

The Vedas consisted of the Saṁhitās and their accompanying Brāhmaṇas. The Itihāsa-Purāṇa has been explained as the ancient lore and legends about mythology and cosmogony. The term Vidyā has been taken to mean sciences by Radhakrishnan and knowledge in general by Max Müller.[249] The Upanishads comprised mysterious doctrines. The ślokas stood for pithy verses and the Sūtras for the prose rules or aphorisms. The Anuvyākhyānas were glosses or elucidations and the Vyākhyānas were commentaries or explanations.

The Vedāṅgas, although closely allied with the Vedas, were not *Śruti* like them, but fell into the *Smṛti* category. The Muṇḍaka Upanishad proclaims them the lower form of knowledge.[250] The Śikshā was the science of phonetics dealing with the correct pronunciation and accentuation of Vedic hymns. The Kalpa dealt with the ceremonial side of the Vedas and included the Śrauta, Gṛhya and Dharma Sūtras. The Śulva sūtras, dealing with the planning, measuring and building of the place of sacrifice and fire altars, were

incorporated within the Śrauta Sūtras. The Vyākaraṇa—grammar, Nirukta—etymology, Chandas—metrics and Jyotisha—astronomy completed the list.

The longer list of the Chāndogya Upanishad[251] mentions the Veda of the Vedas or grammar. It has been described in the Taittirīya Upanishad as comprising the doctrines of pronunciation, viz. letter, accent, effort, modulation or articulation and union of letters.[252] The Chāndogya gives a threefold division of the alphabet as *Svara*—vowels, *Ushmā*—spirants and *Sparśa*—consonants.[253]

Next in line is Pitrya or the science relating to the manes. It dealt with the rules for the funeral and periodical offerings to the ancestors. Rāśi was mathematics or the science of numbers and Daiva the science of portents. Nidhi was the science of time or chronology. Vākovākya, as apparent from its name, was the branch dealing with logic or dialectics. An excellent example is to be found in the dialogue between Yājñavalkya and Gārgī Vācaknavī.[254] Ekāyana was ethics and Devavidyā was etymological interpretation of divine names, e.g. the name of Indra is explained as having been derived from Idandra from his having said 'I have seen this'.[255] Brahmavidyā seems to mean the knowledge of the brāhmaṇas, i.e. the sacrificial science, but Max Müller takes it to stand for pronunciation (śikshā), ceremonial (kalpa) and prosody (chandas).[256]

Bhūtavidyā was the science of elements or demons. The Upanishadic people's belief in spirits and possession is seen in the Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upanishad which describes the wife and daughter of Patañcala Kāpya as possessed by two gandharvas who were questioning people through the mediums.[257] There were people who laid claims on allaying the evil influence of Yakshas, Rākshasas, Bhūtas, Gaṇas, Piśācas, Uragas (serpents) and Grahas (evil spirits).[258]

Kshatravidyā was the science of weapons, useful to a kshatriya. Nakshatravidyā was the science of planets—astronomy. Sarpavidyā dealt with snakes and poisons and Devajanavidyā included fine arts such as singing, dancing, playing of musical instruments, making of perfumes, unguents, etc.

Besides these, the knowledge of anatomy, physiology and medicine must have constituted a part of the curriculum of

studies, although the Upanishads do not mention them. However, the Upanishads know of the divine physicians, the Aśvins and their feat of surgery.[259] The detailed description of the equine[260] and human bodies,[261] their function[262] and the audacious rebuke to disease[263] prove that the science of medicine was quite developed even at the time of the Upanishads and was on its way to becoming the additional Veda.

The education system was based entirely on oral transmission and repetition due to the absence of writing or the sacredness of the Vedas. The Ṛgveda describes the croaking of the frogs in the rainy season 'like students echoing the voice of the teacher'.[264] This rendered the teacher indispensable. The Chāndogya Upanishad tells as that only that knowledge reaches the goal which is taught by the teacher.[265] Therefore, one should approach a Śrotriya and Brahma-niṣṭha teacher with fuel in hand.[266] The teacher is at par with mother, father, guest and the god.[267] Moreover, the complicated and mysterious Upanishad Vidyā could not be obtained without an able preceptor. "Only the man with a teacher knows."[268] It needed a lot of explaining even to an intelligent and well-read person.[269] It could not be elucidated by an incompetent person.[270]

The bulk of the Upanishadic teaching has been recorded in dialogues between the teacher and the taught. There are tutorials featuring Ajātaśatru and Gārgya Bālāki, Yājñavalkya and Maitreyī, Yājñavalkya and Janaka, Pravāhaṇa Jaivali and Uddālaka Āruṇi, Ghora Āṅgirasa and Devakīputra Kṛshṇa, Raikva and Jānaśruti, Hāridrumata Gautama and Satyakāma Jābāla, who, in turn, teaches Upakosala Kāmalāyana, Aśvapati Kaikeya and the six householders, Uddālaka and his son Śvetaketu, Sanatkumāra and Nārada, Citra and Uddālaka, Pippalāda and the six brāhmaṇas, Aṅgiras and Sanaka, Śvetāśvatara, Maitrī, Śākāyanya and king Bṛhadratha.

Teaching was a glorious profession. Many a god had abandoned his astonishing feats of derring-do and taken up the teaching profession. Prajāpati, Indra, Varuṇa, Yama, Agni, Āditya and Umā Haimavatī were all found teaching in the Upanishads.[271]

It was unethical to learn from someone else while the student of one. This is hinted at in the case of Satyakāma

Jābāla in relation to his teacher and also his pupil.[272] Both Satyakāma and his pupil were taught by superhuman agencies because of reluctance or negligence on the part of the teacher. Only incompetence was not to be tolerated. The Kaṭha indicates a change of teacher, if the first one was no good.[273] After the completion of one term the student was free to go to another teacher. Uddālaka is seen learning from Patañcala Kāpya, Aśvapati Kaikeya, Pravāhaṇa Jaivali, Citra Gāṅgyāyanī and his own father Aruṇa.[274] The list includes many kshatriya teachers giving the secret and mysterious doctrines to the brāhmaṇas, although it was not the usual practice.[275] Vaiśya teachers are not mentioned at all, but Śūdras are categorically denied the right of learning and teaching of the Vedas.[276] Probably women could teach as well as philosophize, e.g. Pāṇini knows of the *Ācāryānī*, who was a teacher by her own right, as different from the *Ācāryā*, who was the wife of a teacher.[277]

The pupils stayed at the āśramas of the teacher and were called *Antevāsin*, the resident scholars. Their initiation marked the period of study and celibacy, hence, the term *brahmacārin*.[278] They had to observe penance, abstinence and faith.[279] They were required to go to the teacher respectfully and formally with fuel in hand and with thoughts untroubled by desires, having attained perfect peace.[280] They had to have implicit faith in the teacher. They begged for alms, gathered fuel, looked after the cattle and tended the domestic fires.[281] All good deeds like sacrifice, protracted sacrifice, the vows of silence and fasting, and the life of a hermit, became performed by one who adhered strictly to his brahmacarya.[282]

The Kaṭhopanishad hints that there were three types of pupils.[283] Śaṅkara explains them as the *prathama*—those who anticipating the wishes of the teacher carry them out, the *madhyama*—those who promptly attend to the orders, and the *adhama*—those who neglect the orders. The Carakas were wandering students[284] and the Ativādins were those who declared, understood, perceived, believed, attended to the tutor, performed the sacred duties and ultimately obtained bliss in themselves.[285]

The Upanishads often forewarn the teachers that the secret knowledge of the Upanishads was to be given only to one's own son or a dear pupil.[286] One became a dear pupil by

performing odd jobs around the house or by having unwavering faith in him and thus winning his approval.

The teacher was not only responsible for the development of the intellectual powers of the students, but also their physical and moral training. As the gurukulas were resident universities, the students never had a chance to relax, with the guru or the senior students on the campus. When the students were not under the direct eye of the teacher, they were given arduous tasks that would occupy the whole of their energy and time.[287] The teachers were like fathers.[288] Their wives, like mothers, took care as to what they were eating and how they were feeling.[289] Thence, it was truly a home away from home.

Such personal care and affection could never be repaid. The fees was only a token of gratitude. The student was always beholden to the teacher, who had taken him from darkness to light. He repaid the debt, up to some extent, by self-study and teaching. The magnanimity of the teacher prompted him to say—'Do not cut the tie of affection, even after paying the money'.[290]

The relation between the teacher and the taught is beautifully expressed by the Taittirīya Upanishad—"The teacher is the prior form, the pupil is the later form, knowledge is their union and instruction is the connection."[291] And again—"May he protect us both, may he be pleased with us both. May we work together with vigour, may our study make us illumined. May there be no dislike between us."[292]

Only the wealthy & the upper castes could get this kind of education—taboring, linguistic dog— [illegible]

REFERENCES

1. RV II.12.4; III.34.9.
2. Ibid. X.90.12.
3. Vāj. Saṁ. XXX.5; cf. Taitt. Saṁ. IV.3.10.1-3; Kaṭh. Saṁ. XVII.5.
4. Śat. Br. I.1.4.12 *Ehi* for the brāhmaṇa, *Āgahi* for the vaiśya, *Ādrava* for the rājanya-bandhu and *Ādhāva* for the śūdra.
5. Ait. Br. VII.35.3.
6. Ait. Br. VI.4.4.12-15; Śat. Br. I.1.1.4; X.4.1.9.
7. Bṛhad. I.4.11-13.
8. Chānd. V.10.7.
9. Kaush. II.9.
10. Bṛhad. I.4.11-13; 15.
11. Ranade, *CSUP*, p. 42.
12. Chānd. V.10.7.
13. BG IV.3 चातुर्वर्ण्यं मया सृष्टं गुणकर्मविभागशः ।
14. Radhakrishnan, *The Princ. Upas.*, pp. 42-3.

15. Śat. Br. I.1.1.4; X.4.1.9.
16. Ibid. X.4.1.10 ममैव प्रजा सल्वानां राजानोऽभविष्यन्मम ब्राह्मणा मम वैश्याः ।
17. Bṛhad. I.4.11-14.
18. Chānd. IV.4.1-5.
19. Ibid. V.10.7.
20. Ibid. IV.1-2.
21. RV X.90.12.
22. Bṛhad. I.4.11.
23. Chānd. I.11.
24. Bṛhad. I.4.15.
25. Chānd. III.17.4.
26. Ait. Br. VII.34.1; 35.3.
27. Taitt. I.9; 11 स्वाध्यायान्मा प्रमदः । स्वाध्यायप्रवचनाभ्यां न प्रमदितव्यम् ।
28. Gārgya Bālāki, Bṛhad. II.1.1; Kaush. IV.1.
29. Uddālaka Āruṇi, Chānd. V. 3.6-7; Bṛhad. VI.2.7-8.
30. Taitt. I.11.1 आचार्याय प्रियं धन-माहृत्य प्रजातन्तुं मा व्यवच्छेत्सीः ।
31. Muṇḍ. I.1.3.
32. Bṛhad. VI.2.7 अस्ति हिरण्यस्यापात्तं गो अश्वानां दासीनां प्रवराणां परि-धानस्य ।
33. Chānd. IV.4.5.
34. Ibid. IV.10.1.
35. Ibid. IV.3.5.
36. Taitt. I.9.
37. Chānd. VI.1.1.
38. Ibid. IV.4.5.
39. Chānd. V.10.9; *Brahmahā.*
40. Bṛhad. VI.4.12.
41. Ibid. I.4.11.
42. Ibid. IV.2.1.
43. Ibid. VI.2.4.
44. Chānd. I.8.2; 11.1-2; IV.2.2-4; V.3.6; 11.5; Mait. I.2.
45. Bṛhad. IV.1.1-7.
46. Kaṭha I.1.8.
47. Bṛihad. I.4.11 तस्मात् ब्राह्मणः क्षत्रियमधस्तादुपासते राजसूये ।
48. Śat. Br. V.3.3.12.
49. Ibid. IV.1.4.6.
50. Taitt. Br. III.9.14.
51. Śat. Br. XIII.1.5.4; Ait. Br. VIII.39.1.
52. RV X.90.12.
53. Bṛhad. I.4.11.
54. Chānd. I.8-9; V.3-10; 11-17; Bṛhad. II.1; III; IV; VI.2; Kaush. I.1-4; III.1; IV; Mait. I.1-4.
55. Chānd. IV.1.1.
56. Mait. I.4.
57. Kaush. III.1.
58. e.g. the Kuru king, Pravāhaṇa, Aśvapati, Janaka and Citra are all either performing or are desirous of performing sacrifices. Śat Br.
59. Chānd. I.11.3; V.11.5; etc.
60. Chānd. II.22.2.
61. Śat. Br.; Ait. Br. VII.34.1.
62. Bṛhad. IV.1.1.
63. Chānd. I.8.1.
64. e.g. Aśvapati—Chānd. V.11-17; Ajātaśatru—Bṛhad. II.1; Kaush. IV; Pravāhaṇa—Chānd. V.3-10; Bṛhad. VI.2.
65. Bṛhad. II.1.15 प्रतिलोमं चैतद्यद् ब्राह्मणः क्षत्रियमुपयात् ।
66. Chānd. V.3.7; Bṛhad. VI.2-8 इयं विद्येतः पूर्वं न कस्मिंश्चन ब्राह्मण उवास ।
67. BG IV.1-2.
68. Ibid. IX.1-2.
69. Śat. Br. V.3.3.12.
70. Chānd. V.11.7; Bṛhad. II. 1.14; VI.2.7; etc.
71. Śat. Br. V.1.5.28.
72. Ibid. I.3.2.15.
73. Chānd. I.10.6.
74. Chānd. IV.1.1.
75. Ibid. V.11.5.
76. RV X.90.12.
77. Bṛhad. I.4.12.
78. Ibid.
79. Chānd. V.10.7.
80. Ait. Br. VII.35.3 अन्यस्य बलिकृत् अन्यस्याद्यः यथाकामज्येयः ।

81. Kaush. II.9.
82. Ait. Br. VII.34.1.
83. Śat. Br. I.3.2.15; II.5.2.27; 36; V.1.5.28; etc.
84. See infra.
85. RV X.90.12.
86. Bihad. I.4.13.
87. Taitt. Br. I.2.6.7.
88. Rao, *Uttara Vaidika Samāja evam Saṁskṛti*, pp. 109-11, is of the opinion that Śūdra was the name of a tribe which resided in the north-western India, along with the Mūjavantas, Mahāvṛshas and Vahlīkas.
89. Śat. Br. XIV.1.1.31; Ait. Br. II.81.
90. Chānd. IV.4.1-5.
91. Ibid. IV.10.
92. Bṛhad. VI.3.7-12.
93. Ibid. IV.1.6.
94. Chānd. IV.4.2.
95. Ibid. IV.2.3.
96. Mait. VII.8 शूद्रशिष्याः शूद्राश्च शास्त्रविद्वांसः ।
97. Chānd. V.10.7.
98. Ibid. V.24.4.
99. Swami Nikhilananda, *The Upanishads*, Gen. Intro., pp. 15-6.
100. Chānd. II.23 त्रयो धर्म स्कन्धाः, यज्ञोऽध्ययनं दानमिति प्रथमस्तप एव द्वितीयो ब्रह्मचार्याचार्यकुलवासी तृतीयोऽत्यन्तमात्मानमाचार्यकुलेऽवसादयन् । सर्व एते पुण्यलोका भवन्ति, ब्रह्मसंस्थोऽमृतत्वमेति ।
101. Taitt. I.9 स्वाध्यायप्रवचने च ।
102. Bṛhad. III.5.1 पाण्डित्यं निर्विद्य बाल्येन् तिष्ठासेत् । बाल्यं च पाण्डित्यं च निर्विद्य अथ मुनिः । अमौनं च मौनं च निर्विद्य अथ ब्राह्मणः ।
103. Ibid. III.8.10.
104. Chānd. V.10.1-3 ये चेमेऽरण्ये श्रद्धा तप इत्युपासते···य इमे ग्रामे इष्टापूर्ते दत्तमित्युपासते ।
105. Bṛhad. IV.3.22.
106. Śvet. VI.21.
107. Mait. IV.3 स्वाश्रमेष्वेवानुक्रमणं स्वधर्मस्य वा एतद् व्रतम् ।
108. Praśna I.2.
109. Chānd. VII.11.3.
110. Ibid. IV.10.1.
111. Chānd. VI.1.2 स ह द्वादश वर्ष उपेत्य चतुर्विंशति वर्षः सर्वान् वेदानधीत्य·····एवाय ।
112. Max Muller, *S.B.E.*, I, p. 92, fn. 1.
113. Chānd. III.16.
114. Bṛhad. II.1.14; VI.2.7; Chānd. IV.2.1-2; 4.3; V.3.6; 11.7; VII. 1.1; VIII.7.2; Taitt. III.1.1; Praśna I.1; Muṇḍ. I.1.3; Kaush. I.1; IV.19; Mait. I.2; II.3.
115. As in the case of Gārgya Bālāki, Nārada, Bhṛgu, Uddālaka, etc.
116. As in the case of Upakosala Kāmalāyana, Chānd. IV.10.1.
117. Satyakāma tended the cows, Chānd. IV.4-5; Upakosala looked after the fires, Chānd. IV.10.1-2 and a student begged for food, Chānd. IV.3.5.
118. Chānd. VII.20.
119. Praśna VI.8 त्वं हि नः पिता योऽस्मकर्मविद्यायाः परं पारं तारयसि । Cf. Manu II.152.
120. Chānd. VIII.5.1-4.
121. Taitt. I.11.
122. Chānd. VIII.15.
123. Bṛhad. I.4.16.
124. Ibid. I.4.3.
125. Ibid. VI.4.28.
126. Ibid. I.4.17.
127. Ibid.
128. Kaṭha I.1.23.
129. Bṛhad. I.5.17.
130. Ibid. VI.4.17.
131. Ibid. VI.4.24.
132. Kaush. II.11.
133. Taitt. I.11.

134. Kaṭha I.1.7-8.
135. Chānd. V.10.3.
136. Ibid. II.23.1.
137. Taitt. I.9.
138. Ibid. I.11.
139. Chānd. VII.15.2.
140. Bṛhad. II.4.1; IV.5.1-2.
141. Bṛhad. I.5.17; Kaush. II.15.
142. Kaush. II.15.
143. Manu VI.2.
144. Jābāla Up. 4.
145. Chānd. III.16.
146. Bṛhad. II.4.1; IV.5.1-2. The latter ref. has the word *pravrajishyan*, signifying Pravrajyā or Saṁnyāsa.
147. Mait. I.2.
148. Chānd. VIII.5.2-3.
149. Ibid. V.10.1 ये चेमेऽरण्ये श्रद्धातप इत्युपासते ।
150. Bṛhad. VI.2.15 श्रद्धां सत्यमुपासते ।
151. Ibid. III.5.1; IV.4.22.
152. Muṇḍ. I.2.11.
153. G.C. Pande, *Studies in the Origin of Buddhism.*
154. Mangaldeo Shastri, *Aupanishadika Dhāra.*
155. *Vedic Age*, p. 451; pp. 498-9; Thapar, *Hist. of Ind.*, pp. 46-7.
156. Bṛhad. IV.1.1-7.
157. Ranade, *CSUP*, p. 216.
158. Altekar, Vedic Society, *Cultural Heritage of India*, I, p. 224; Radhakrishnan, *The Princ. Upas.*, p. 678.
159. Chānd. II.23.
160. Brhad. III.5.1.
161. Ibid. IV.5.1-2.
162. Ibid. IV.3.22.
163. Muṇḍ. III.2.6.
164. Ibid. III.2.4 तपसो वाप्यलिगात् ।
165. Mait. VII.9.
166. Chānd. V.10.1; Bṛhad. VI.2.15; Muṇḍ. I.2.11.
167. Bṛhad. III.5.1; IV.5.1-2; Muṇḍ. III.2.4.
168. The details of these ceremonies as sifted from the Gṛhya Sūtras and the Smṛtis have been comprehensively dealt with by Keith, *RPVU*, vol. II and Kane, *Hist. of Dharmaśāstra*, vol. II, part I.
169. Bṛhad. VI.4.3.
170. Ibid. VI.4.10-11.
171. Bṛhad. VI.4.14-18.
172. Ibid. VI.4.22-23.
173. Bṛhad. VI.4.24-26.
174. Ibid. VI.4.27.
175. Chānd. IV.4.5 तमुपनीय ।
176. Taitt. I.11.1.
177. Taitt. I.11.
178. Bṛhad. I.4.2-3.
179. Ibid. II.4; IV.5; Chānd. IV.2.4-5.
180. Bṛhad. I.5.12.
181. Ibid. VI.4.12.
182. Kaush. II.11.
183. Bṛhad. I, V, 17.
184. Kaush. II 15.
185. *Vedic Index*, SV Agnidagdha.
186. Chānd. VIII.8.5.
187. Īśa 17 भस्मान्तं शरीरम् ।
188. Bṛhad. V.11.1.
189. Chānd. V.9.2.
190. Ibid. VII.5.3.
191. Īśa 18.
192. Muṇḍaka, I, 2, 4-5.
193. Taitt. Saṁ. II.5.8.6 teste Keith, *RPVU*, I, p. 160.
194. Kaṭha I.3.17.
195. Bṛhad. III.6; 8.
196. Ibid. II.4.2-3; IV.5.3-4 यन्नु म इयम् भगोः सर्वा पृथिवी वित्तेन पूर्णा स्यात् स्यां न्वहं तेनामृता ?·····येनाहं नामृता स्यां किमहं तेन कुर्याम् ?
197. Bṛhad. IV.5.1 स्त्री प्रज्ञैव तर्हि कात्यायनी ।
198. Chānd. I.10.1; 5-6.
199. Kaṭha I.1.7; Chānd. IV.10.2.
200. Chānd. IV.2.3-5.
201. Ibid. IV.4.1.
202. Ibid. III.17.6.

203. Bṛhad. VI.5. There are 38 such names. See Appendix D.
204. *Sinīvāli*, Bṛhad. VI.4.21; *Sarasvatī*, Bṛhad. 4.27; *Śrī*, Taitt. I.4.2; *Aditi*, Kaṭha II. 1.7.
205. Kena IV.1.
206. Bṛhad. I.4.1-3.
207. The Bible.
208. Chānd. I.1.5-6.
209. Praśna I.4.
210. Chānd. V.2.7-8.
211. Bṛhad. VI.4.17.
212. RV I.117; 179.
213. Bṛhad. II.4; IV.5; and III.6; 8.
214. Ibid. IV.5.1.
215. For details see infra.
216. Kaṭha I.1.25.
217. Śat. Br. V.1.6.10 अयज्ञीयो वै योऽपत्नीकः ।
218. Ait. Br. IV.17.1.
219. Śat. Br. IV.1.5.9.
220. Chānd. IV.2.3-5.
221. Taitt. I.4.2 आवहन्ती वितन्वाना कुर्वाणाचीरमात्मनः वासांसि मम गावश्च अन्नपाने च सर्वदा । ततो मे श्रियमावह लोमशाँ पशुभिः सह ।
222. Śat. Br. XI.4.3.2.
223. RV X.85-46.
224. Bṛhad. VI.4.6-7.
225. Ibid. II.4.4; IV.5.5; VI.4.21; Kaush. II.10.
226. Ibid. II.4.1; IV.5.1.
227. Ibid. I.3.18.
228. Ait. Br. III.12.12 एकस्य बह्व्यो जाया भवन्ति, न एकस्यै बह्वः सहपतयः । Cf. Go. Br. III.20.
229. Chānd. IV.2.3-5.
230. Bṛhad. VI.4.2.
231. Ait. II.1.3.
232. Bṛhad. VI.4.28.
233. Praśna II.13.
234. Altekar, *Position of Women in Hindu Civilization*, p. 339.
235. Bṛhad. I.5.17; Kaush. II.15.
236. RV X.85.46.
237. Bṛhad. II.4.1; IV.5.2.
238. Sharma, *Aspects of Poli. Ideas & Institutions*, pp. 79-81.
239. Chānd. I.10.7; IV.10.1-3; Kaṭha I.1.7.
240. Cf. Vedamitra, *Education in Anc. Ind.*, p. 61.
241. Chānd. VI.1.2.
242. Ibid. VIII.11.3.
243. Bṛhad. III.7.1; Chānd. V.3.6; 10.4.
244. Ibid. III.3.1; 7.1.
245. अध्ययनार्थं व्रतचरणाच्चरकः ।
246. Bṛhad. II.4.10; IV.1.2; 5.11; Mait. VI.32.
247. Muṇḍ. I.1.5.
248. Chānd. VII.1.2.
249. Radhakrishnan, *The Princ. Upas.*, p. 199; Max Muller, *S.B.E.*, XV, p. 111.
250. Muṇḍ. *loc. cit.*
251. Chānd. VII.1.2.
252. Taitt. I.2.1.
253. Chānd. II.22.3-5.
254. Bṛhad. III.6; 8.
255. Ait. I.3.13-14 इदमादर्शमिति तस्यादिदन्द्रो नाम ।
256. Max Muller, *S.B.E.*, I, p. 109.
257. Bṛhad. III.3.1; तस्यासीद् दुहिता गंधर्वगृहीता । 7.1; भार्या··· ।
258. Mait. VII.9 ये चान्ये ह यक्षराक्षस भूतगणपिशाचोरगग्रहादीनामर्थम् पुरस्कृत्य शमयाम इति ।
259. Bṛhad. II.5.17; "O Aśvins, you set a horse's head on Dadhyaṅ".
260. Bṛhad. I.1.1.
261. Mait. I.3; III.4.
262. Bṛhad. IV.2.2-3; Kaush. IV. 20; Chānd. VI.8.3-5; VIII.6.1; etc.
263. Chānd. III.16.7 स किं म एतदुपतपसि योऽहमनेन न प्रेष्यामीति ।
264. RV VII.103.5.
265. Chānd. IV.9.2 आचार्याद्धैव विद्या विदिता साधिष्ठम् प्रापतीति ।

266. Muṇḍ. I.2.12.
267. Taitt. I.11.2.
268. Chānd. VI.14.2 आचार्यवान् पुरुषो वेद ।
269. Bṛhad. IV.3.33 मेधावी राजा; Bṛhad. IV.2.1 अधीतवेद उक्त उपनिषत्कः ।
270. Kaṭha I.2.8.
271. Prajāpati—Chānd. VIII; Indra—Kaush. III.1; Varuṇa—Taitt. III; Yama—Kaṭha; Agni—Chānd. IV.10-13; Āditya—Bṛhad. VI.5; Umā—Kena IV.1.
272. Chānd. IV.5-9; 10-13.
273. Kaṭha I.2.8-9.
274. Bṛhad. III.7.1; Chānd. III. 11.4; V.3-9; 10 et seq; Kaush. I.1.
275. Bṛhad. II.1.15; VI.2.8; Chānd. I.8-9; Kaush. IV.19.
276. Mait. VII.9.
277. *Aṣhṭādhyāyī*, IV.1.49.
278. Chānd. II.23; III.11.5; Taitt. I.4.3; etc.
279. Praśna I.2.
280. Muṇḍ. I.2.12.
281. Chānd. IV.2.5; 4.5; 10.1.
282. Ibid. VIII.5.1-4.
283. Kaṭha I.1.5.
284. Bṛhad. III.3.1; 7.1
285. Chānd. VII.15.4; Muṇḍ. III. 1.4.
286. Ibid. III.11.5.
287. Ibid. IV.4.5.
288. Praśna VI.8.
289. Chānd. IV.10.3.
290. Taitt. I.11.1 आचार्याय प्रियं धनमाहृत्य प्रजातन्तुं मा व्यवच्छेत्सीः ।
291. Ibid. I.4.3 आचार्य पूर्वरूपम् अन्तेवास्युत्तररूपं विद्या सन्धिः प्रवचनस्संधानम् ।
292. Ibid. II.1 सह नाववतु सह नौ भुनक्तु सहवीर्यं करवावहै, तेजस्विनावधीतगस्तु मा विद्विषामहै ।

CHAPTER VI

Material Life

Prosperity, to an Upanishadic person, was in being healthy, wealthy, the lord of all beings and being lavishly provided with all human enjoyments.[1] It is said that when a man is young and good, well-read, swift, firm and strong, then the entire earth is full of treasure for him.[2] Cattle and horses, elephants and gold, slaves and wives, and fields and houses contribute to the greatness in man.[3] Long-living descendants, cattle, elephants, gold, horses, the possession of land and a large house are offered to Naciketas. He could have come into great wealth, long life and much land, if he so wished.[4] The person who meditated on the Udgītha kept his senses, lived a full, long life, became great with children, cattle and fame.[5]

Most of the Upanishadic people are found living in the villages. Ushasti Cākrāyaṇa was living in Ibhyagrāma[6] and Raikva in a village, which was later granted to him and named Raikva-parṇa after him.[7] The texts acknowledge that people who were living in the villages performed sacrifices, works of public utility and practised charity.[8] The concept of wealth, as laid down by the Chāndogya and the Kaṭha Upanishads,[9] included large land holdings and great number of cows. This indicated a rural setting. But on the other hand, these very passages also refer to elephants, which hinted at cities rather than villages, since they were being popularized by the growing pomp and show of the royal courts.

The City

The Upanishads mention the term *Pura* which has been rendered as 'a fort' or 'a city'.[10] The Aitareya Upanishad seems to refer to strongholds or forts built of Ayas.[11] The Chāndogya and the Kaushītaki seem to hint at the existence of a city with a palace for the ruler called *dahara* in the first instance and *saṁsthāna* and *āyatana* in the second.[12] And these are not isolated examples either. The Brāhmaṇa texts mention five cities of the Kuru-Pañcālas, viz. Kāroṭī, Asandīvant, Kāmpilya, Kauśāmbī, Paricakrā and Mashṇāra.[13] The existence of Kāśī or Vārāṇasī is implied by the name of Ajātaśatru Kāśya.[14]

Ghosh hesitates in calling them cities, for they were only putative early capitals. The excavated remains of sites, which fall within the periphery of Upanishadic stretch of land and the general time scheme, are not even those of townships. Evidently the rulers had their headquarters at places that were not very different from rural settlements, and at best relatively large.[15]

Ghosh has put forward some broad distinguishing features of the city[16] as—(i) the population was denser than in rural areas and was settled in a restricted area, (ii) only a limited part of its area, if any at all, was utilized for agricultural purposes, (iii) population was predominantly non-agricultural in occupation and was dependent on rural areas for supply of food and raw materials, (iv) the presence of merchants to supply the citizens with the necessities of life.

The Upanishads do not provide any kind of information on the first three points, but the presence of a merchant is hinted at in Saindhava salt and horses[17] which needed merchants and traders to introduce them to the hub of the Upanishadic culture. The words vaṇik and śreshṭhin confirm it.[18]

Ghosh does not believe that a greater diversity of occupations was necessarily a feature of the city. Instead, he has suggested that there might have been centres with specialized functions.[19]

Sharma, however, has suggested different criteria for judging the emergence of cities. According to him, there has to be "a planned lay-out, regular roads and streets, public

drains, fortifications, markets, temples, monasteries, residences of the royalty and the nobility, and above all, houses of a reasonable standard."[20]

The Upanishads do not tell us about the lay-out of any township, but they mention different categories of roads—*patha, pantha, mahāpatha*—connecting two villages, and *mahān adhvar*;[21] public tanks and lotus-ponds—*veśānta, pushkariṇī*;[22] and fortifications and royal palaces.[23]

The use of iron and coined money has been laid down by some as criteria for urbanization. The evidence about any kind of money, coined or otherwise, is, however, too meagre to base any conclusions upon. The Upanishads only mention the words *nishka* and *pāda* without defining their purport or usage.[24] Both of these objects are delivered to the brāhmaṇas for their extra-Vedic knowledge.

The use of iron is clearer, for not only is the word *ayas* mentioned in the Upanishads but it has also been classified as red, i.e. copper and black, i.e. iron.[25] As the geographical and chronological horizon of the Upanishads is conterminous with the Painted Grey Ware culture, it is tempting to correlate the two. Especially because many of the known P.G.W. sites fall in the hub of the Upanishadic culture. Scholars have even tried to recognize the pottery type from the descriptions of Brahmanical literature.[26]

The existence of cities could have been proved more satisfactorily if the Upanishads had given some glimpses of the places where the philosopher kings and teachers lived. As it is, tribal or geographical names of the kingdoms occur but the names of their capitals or other townships do not make an appearance.

House-Building

The Upanishads give us no clue whatsoever about the plan and lay-out of the houses. The Kaṭhopanishad mentions bricks in connection with fire-altars,[27] therefore it is a fair surmise that the houses were also built with bricks. But whether those bricks were sun-dried or kiln-burnt is anybody's guess.[28] The occurrence of *aṇi*—nail, *śaṅku*—peg and *parigha*—door-latch,

is about all that the Upanishads have to offer by way of houses and house-building.[29]

The Brāhmaṇa texts give some useful information on the subject of selection of the sacrificial site and construction of the shed and other huts. The process can be summed up thus. The ground was measured and pegs dug into the ground. The door jambs and gables were set up and the walls made of wattle and daub. Ultimately, the roof was thatched with reeds.[30]

This seems to agree with the ground plan dug out at some of the ancient sites. One of the P.G.W. sites, Bhagwanpura, brings out an evolutionary pattern in house construction. It is developed from semi-circular huts to mud-walls and finally to structures of baked bricks. Most significant are the remains of a thirteen-room house, suggesting a prosperous society.[31]

Transport

The Upanishadic people were great wanderers. Especially two of them—Bālāki Gārgya and Uddālaka Āruṇi—are seen travelling far and wide. Bālāki stayed among the Uśīnaras, Satvat-Matsyas, Kuru-Pañcālas and Kāśī-Videhas.[32] Still wider area was traversed by Uddālaka who knew of the Gandhāras,[33] lived among the Madras,[34] visited the Kaikeyas,[35] was a brāhmaṇa belonging to the Kuru-Pañcālas and had been to the Videhas.[36]

Lesser distances could have been covered on foot, but it stands to reason that one who was desirous of going a long way, took recourse to chariots or boats.[37] Chariots were great favourites with the Upanishadic people. Many philosophical ideas have been explained by the example of a chariot or its wheel.[38] Horses were yoked to the chariots.[39] Sometimes mule chariots are also mentioned.[40]

The slower modes of transport comprised carriages or carts to which oxen were yoked, instead of the more common horses or mules. The *Śakaṭa* is mentioned in the Chāndogya and Maitrāyaṇī Upanishads.[41] The Bṛhadāraṇyaka mentions an *Anas* as moving slowly due to its being heavily loaded.[42] The Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa also shows the *anas* as the cart on which the sacrificial grains or Soma were brought to the sacrificial

arena. It has been described in great detail.[43] The Chāndogya portrays Raikva Sayugvan, a great exponent of the Brahma-knowledge, as sitting under the shade of his cart, scratching his scars. The description suits an illiterate cart-driver better than a learned man.[44]

The horse, as has been seen elsewhere, was dear to the Aryan heart.[45] It was used for riding. The Bṛhadāraṇyaka gives different names for the mounts of different categories of beings. A horse was called *Haya* when it carried the devas, *Vājī* when it carried the gandharvas, *Arvā* when it carried the asuras and *Aśva* when it carried men.[46]

Elephants had been domesticated. They were probably used for fetching and carrying things.[47] Their sustenance, like that of the proverbial white elephant, would have proved dear, hence the reluctance of the priests in accepting them as gifts.[48]

The alternative to a road journey was to follow the riverine route. Considering the terrain of the period, boats would have been equally popular, if not more. The dense forests and numerous wild beasts must have made the land route difficult and dangerous. The Upanishads know various kinds of boats, e.g. *nāva, plava* or *uḍupa.*[49] Ocean-going vessels like *pota, śatāritra*, etc.[50] are not mentioned in the Upanishads, although they were definitely aware of the existence of the sea.[51]

There were bridges to cross over to the other side, as reflected from the philosophical imagery of the Chāndogya, Kaṭha and Muṇḍaka Upanishads.[52]

Food and Drink

The Upanishads, being principally philosophical treatises, give more details about the speculations on food than the actual culinary habits. Food was proclaimed to be Brahman.[53] A person was instructed never to abuse food and never to shun it.[54] It had an important position as a member of the trio of Breath, Speech and Food.[55] It was the first-born. When, by his contemplative power, Brahman expanded, food was produced. Everything else—Prāṇa, Manas, Satya, the Worlds, the works (sacrificial rituals) and immortality were born from it.[56] Elsewhere also, food is called Prajāpati and the cause of all creatures.[57]

Prajāpati created seven kinds of food: one he made common to all, two he assigned to the devas, three he made for himself and one he gave to the animals.[58]

As soon as the worlds were created, they were seized by hunger and thirst. The two were given a share in all the offerings made to the gods.[59] A hungry man was never to be spurned.[60] If anyone, specially a brāhmaṇa guest, remained in a house without getting food, he took away with him all the good deeds of the householder.[61] Therefore, a householder was to provide food for all his dependants: the family members, the servants, the guests, the household animals, down to ants, before he himself partook of food.[62] The kings kept open houses wishing that people everywhere should eat their food.[63]

The Chāndogya proves that the mind was based on food and without food it did not function properly.[64] The Maitrāyaṇī gives formulas to be uttered before and after taking food, rendering it a sacrificial offering to the Self.[65] Food was considered to have been clothed when surrounded on both sides by water.[66] This refers to the practice of rinsing the mouth before and after every meal.

Rice and lentils seem to have been staple articles of food. *Godhūma*, wheat, is mentioned only once[67] whereas the combination of Vrīhi-yava, rice and barley, makes its appearance quite often in the Upanishadic texts.[68] Lentils, specially the *māshas*, are mentioned. Ushasti Cākrāyaṇa begged from a rich person who was eating bad māshas while there was a drought in the Kuru country.[69] The Śatapatha bears testimony to the fact that māshas were great favourites with some people.[70] Other food grains included Tila, Aṇu, Priyaṅgu, Masūra, Khalva, Khalakula, Sarshapa and Śyāmāka.[71]

The Upanishadic recipes, where they have seen the light of day, were evolved more for sacrificial requirements than to tempt the palate. Some of them sound passable but others take the appetite away. The Bṛhadāraṇyaka mentions five methods for cooking rice. It was either cooked in water and taken with *ghee* or was cooked with milk, curds, sesamum or meat.[72] The same text mentions the *Sthālīpāka* but does not give any details about the ingredients or the method of preparation.[73] The ten cultivated grains, viz. rice, barley, sesamum, beans, millet, panic-seeds, wheat, lentils, pulse and vetches,

were to be ground and prepared with curds, honey and clarified butter.[74] A mash of all kinds of herbs was to be stirred with curds and honey and was to be offered in the fire on a full moon day. The residue was to be finished off by the priest, with clarified butter.[75] *Upasecana*, condiment or sauce, was known.[76]

Brāhmaṇa literature is full of details regarding the food habits of the people. Most of the dishes were prepared for offering as libations, but as the brāhmaṇas, being *Hutāda*, were supposed to eat them, they made the best of things.

The Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa elaborates upon the preparation of *Puroḍāśa*.[77] *Apūpa*, *Karambha*, *Yavāgu*, *Yūsha*, *Payas* and *Kṛsara* were some of the other dishes.

Grains were processed in a variety of ways. The unbroken grain, *Akshata Dhāna*, was puffed, *Lājā*, flattened, *Pṛthuka* or powdered after roasting *Saktu*. *Dhānā* has been explained as fried barley cooked with butter.[78]

Meat was preferred to grains or vegetables. The Bṛhadāraṇyaka promises the best kind of offspring to those who eat *Māṁsaudana*, rice cooked with meat.[79] The Śatapatha proclaims meat to be the best kind of food.[80] Both mutton and beef were eaten.[81] Although the belief that cows and oxen were too useful to be killed for eating was gaining a stronger foothold than before, there were people who still favoured soft and savoury veal.[82] The Chāndogya prescribes abstinence from meat eating for the period of one year or forever as a special vow.[83]

Milk and all its products constituted most of the dietary. Even the Upanishads, which have so little to offer on the topic of food and drinks, are full of references to milk, curds, butter and clarified butter.[84] The sacrificial ceremonies could not advance a step without the use of clarified butter. Every oblation was offered with a spoonful of clarified butter and a *svāhā*. The Chāndogya mentions the process of getting butter from the curds.[85]

The flavouring was done with salt and honey.[86] Sesamum and probably mustard were used for preparing dishes as well as for extracting oil.[87]

The fruits of Āmra, Udumbara, Pippala,[88] Aksha, Amalaka, Kola[89] and Kadalī[90] are mentioned by the Upanishads. They also refer to the fruit of Nyagrodha tree.[91]

Of all the drinks known from the Upanishads, Soma deserves to be mentioned first, as it was one inebriating drink which had the sanction of religion as well as society. The Brāhmaṇa texts make frequent mention about the pressing and preparation of Soma. It is remarkable that the Bṛhadāraṇyaka mentions Soma as being eaten rather than drunk.[92] It might be explained, to some extent, if we take into account the fact that Soma was prepared with milk, with curds or sour milk and also with barley.[93] Probably this last was made into solid food and not liquid. But, then it might just be a figurative way of expression. The Brāhmaṇas repeatedly describe Soma as being drunk by the officiating priests, in *Camasas*.[94] It was identified with Candramas, as the lord of plants and herbs.[95] Its authority was accepted by the brāhmaṇas who proclaimed the coronated king as the lord of the people and Soma as theirs.[96]

Surā was the more common drink, popular from the days of the Ṛgveda, which shows that it was drunk in the Sabhā and gave rise to brawls.[97] It was probably prepared from fermented grains and plants. Sometimes drinking of spirituous liquors was looked on with disfavour.[98] But, despite admonitions and severe penalties, people still indulged in drinking bouts,[99] and it was a long boast for a king to say truthfully that there was no drunkard in his kingdom.[100]

Milk and many of its products like Śṛta, Śara, Dadhi, Mastu, Ātañcana, Navanīta, Ghṛta, Amikshā, Vājin, Phāṇṭa, etc. were often prescribed during the performance of a sacrifice or the observance of a vow.[101]

Dress and Ornament

The Upanishads know of garments made of wool or cotton. There are clothes of undyed, pale sheep's wool[102] as well as other white textures.[103] There are also clothes dyed in saffron or *lodhra* and known as the *Mahārajana*.[104] The Maitrāyaṇī alludes to *Kashāya* colour also.[105]

The textile industry was practically run by women, for from the earliest times, weaving, sewing, dyeing and embroidering were exclusive to women.[106] The Taittirīya Upanishad mentions the goddess Śrī making garments for herself and the invoker.[107] The Bṛhadāraṇyaka mentions a female gold-

embroiderer, *Peśaskarī*, who took the gold thread and converted it into manifold beautiful designs.[108] Therefore, it was in the fitness of things that the terms 'warp and woof' were employed by a female philosopher, Gārgī Vācaknavī to discuss philosophical matters.[109]

Many colours are mentioned in the Upanishads, though not all of them refer to the colour of the clothes. Among them are nīla, kṛshṇa, kapila, pingala, pāṇḍu, mahārajas, lohita and śukla.[110] A variety of red is known as *Kapyāsa*, the seat of a monkey.[111]

There is no information whatsoever on the type of clothes worn at the time of the Upanishads. Only the Kaushītaki mentions a loose sort of garment, worn by the son and another new cloth covering the father during the handing-over ceremony.[112]

Ornaments usually adorn the female of the species and the few female figures in the Upanishads are more concerned with knowledge than with physical adornments.[113] Maitreyī, even though she is a woman, does not have the usual passion for ornaments. She does not want a share in her husband's worldly wealth but definitely demands her right to the Brahma-knowledge. Only two words—*nishka* and *sṛṅkā*, occur by way of ornaments.[114] There have been discussions as to whether the *nishka* was a necklace, or the prototype of coins. Similarly, *Sṛṅkā* stood either for a jewel-studded ornament worn round the neck or for the fetters of world and wealth.

The tools of the warfare were as much a part of a warrior's get-up as ornaments were of a woman. The Maitrāyaṇī describes a warrior as wearing *mauli*, *kuṇḍala* and bearing a staff and a bow.[115] *Kiṅkiṇi*, a small bell, also finds mention in the same text.[116]

Razors and nail-parers were known.[117] Looking glasses, with mercury rubbed on the back, had not come into existence, but a vessel filled with water[118] or a flat well-polished metal surface served the purpose.[119]

The personal toilet included, as Kaushītaki describes it, *phala*, *añjana*, *mālya*, *vasa* and *cūrṇa*.[120] Clothes, garlands, powder-kohl and probably the mirror seem to be indicated. Indra and Virocana adorned themselves, put on their best clothes and made themselves tidy before looking at their

reflections in a pan of water, on the instruction of Prajāpati.[121] Virocana took this for gospel truth and therefore, even now the asuras adorn the body of the dead man with clothes and ornaments.[122] The Chāndogya tells us that all the knower of the Self had to do was to wish for the enjoyment of the worlds of perfumes and garlands, and they became available to him.[123]

Entertainment

Philosophical discussions seem to be one of the most popular forms of entertainment in the time of the Upanishads.[124] The brāhmaṇas and the kings enjoyed them alike. They were held during the free time of the long drawn sacrificial *Sattras*. The kings arranged them, like the sports in ancient Greece and Rome, as competitions. The winner not only won monetary prizes but was also highly acclaimed by the élite.[125] Mostly, the learned brāhmaṇas, who acted as priests in the sacrifices, participated but even kings and their humbler subjects could make a name for themselves. The cases of the kings, Pravāhaṇa, Aśvapati and Ajātaśatru[126] and the commoners, Raikva, the cart-driver,[127] and Satyakāma, the Śūdrā's son,[128] could be cited as examples.

The sacrificial ceremonies had provisions for ritualistic singing and playing on instruments also. The Udgātṛ priests sang in order to secure immortality for the gods, offerings for the fathers, hope for men, grass and water for the cattle, heaven for the sacrificer and food for himself.[129] Those who sang the Sāman with knowledge obtained all their desires.[130] By mere will, song and music came to those who desired the world of song and music, and they became happy.[131]

The Upanishads mention a variety of sounds. The high sounding one was good for cattle and belonged to Agni. The undefined one belonged to Prajāpati, the defined one to Soma, the soft and smooth to Vāyu, the smooth and strong to Indra, the heron-like to Bṛhaspati and the ill-sounding to Varuṇa.[132] The Maitrāyaṇī knows of seven kinds of sounds—the sounds of the rivers, a bell, a brass vessel, a wheel, the croaking of frogs, rain and as when one speaks in a still place.[133]

Many musical instruments make their appearance to illustrate philosophical points. Among them are Dundubhi,

Śaṅkha, Vīṇā,[134] Lambara[135] and Tūrya.[136] Dundubhi was a percussion instrument, since its player is called *dundubhyāghāta*, i.e. the beater of the drums, and not the more usual *vāda*, as in Vīṇāvāda. The Bṛhadāraṇyaka refers to the vacant space within a dundubhi.[137] Śaṅkha or the conch-shell was also referred to as an instrument but whether it played musical notes or just blew a sound is not clear. Vīṇā is still a popular instrument in India. It was played solo or accompanied by songs. Vīṇāvāda was the lute-player, whereas Vīṇāgāthin was the person who sang gāthās to the accompaniment of vīṇā. Majumdar is of the opinion that these gāthās foreshadow the 'songs of victory' which developed into the great epic.[138] The Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa mentions *Vīṇāgaṇagin*, probably the leader of a band of vīṇā-players.[139]

Lambara or its alternative term Āḍambara, denotes a percussion instrument. This is borne out by the allusion to the empty space within it.[140] Tūrya occurs in the Kaṭhopanishad where beautiful maidens are mentioned, having chariots and Tūryas with them.[141] On philological grounds, it might be equated with *turhi*, the bugle, heralding the arrival of a notable person or the commencement of war.

Thus, music played an important part in the Upanishadic life. Besides the sacrifices, where singing of the psalms of the Sāmaveda was an inseparable part of the ceremony, many sacraments required ceremonial singing and dancing. The newly-wed bride was asked to perform before her new relations and the expectant mother was asked to sing merrily in the *Sīmantonnayana* ceremony. The groom was expected to sing a *gāthā* after the bride's treading on the stone.[142]

On the basis of the evidence provided by the Kaṭha, it can be deduced that music was the particular field of specialization for women.[143] The Śatapatha tells us that speech, being a female, was won over by the devas when they performed dance and music for her, because in this world women are always won over by singing and dancing.[144]

Dancing, which comes to man as naturally as breathing or laughing, must have been a popular way of spending an evening or celebrating an occasion. We have yet to find a primitive society which did not indulge in this pastime. But the Upanishads tell us very little about dancing, ceremonial

or otherwise. They merely mention dancing and singing together, *Nṛtyagīte* and that is that.[145]

Drama, which had its origin in the dialogue hymns of the Ṛgveda, had become a developed art by the time of the Maitrāyaṇī Upanishad. This text mentions *Naṭa*, the actor, who changes his dress in a moment.[146] It also knows of the people who came on the stage to perform, the *Raṅgāvatāriṇ*.[147] This shows drama in a proper setting, with a stage and costumes provided for the actors. The acting profession was not treated as a dignified one, since they are classed with thieves as unworthy of heaven.[148]

The same text obliquely refers to the art of painting and jugglery, too.[149]

Gaming, which was very popular in the days of the Ṛk and Atharva Saṁhitās and was a part of the consecration ceremony in the Brāhmaṇas, has been mentioned only twice in the entire Upanishadic texts, and then too, to explain a philosophical point. It just gives a glimpse of the game. It is said that all the lower castes belong to him who has conquered with the Kṛta cast.[150] Another passage shows that Kṛta was the highest throw in dice and numbered ten.[151] The commentators have explained that Kali counted one, Dvāpara two, Tretā three and Kṛta four, and that Kṛta absorbed the others and added to ten.

Chariot-racing and horse-racing were popular entertainments. Chariot-racing formed a part of the Rājasuya in which the king-elect was allowed to win. The Upanishads are full of descriptions of the chariot and its wheel, but do not mention a race.[152]

Pets were kept. The word *Śvāpada*, occurring in a domestic context, denotes the presence of cats and dogs and the household is entreated to look after them and provide food for them.[153] The detailed description of honey, honey-comb and bees hints at an apiary.[154] A passage in the Chāndogya Upanishad shows that a falcon was kept as a pet. It is mentioned with its legs tied with a string, which shows that it was used for hawking.[155]

Medicine

The Upanishadic people were generally healthy and long-

living. They remembered the seer Mahīdāsa Aitareya, who had lived to be a hundred and sixteen years of age,[156] and had the effrontery to say, "Why do not afflict me with this sickness, me, who am not going to die by it." They prayed for a long and healthy life and not the incapacitated life of an invalid. The ideal life was to live a hundred years, always performing the works.[157] Even the old and disabled were not killed or abandoned like some ancient societies. Instead, they were well looked after, in health or illness, 'for better or worse'. When an elderly person was lying on his death bed, his relatives flocked around him and asked him, "Do you recognize me?"[158] The old handed over their possessions and responsibilities to their sons and went to live in the forests.[159]

The Upanishadic people have been described as fair or reddish-complexioned with tawny eyes or dark-complexioned with red eyes.[160] The anatomical details show their eye for detail. "This body is a mass of bones, skin, sinews, marrow, flesh, seed, blood, mucus, tears, rheum, faeces, urine, wind, bile and phlegm."[161] It arose from sexual intercourse, grew in darkness (of the womb), came out through the urinary passage. It is built up with bones, smeared over with flesh, covered with skin, filled with faeces, urine, bile, phlegm, marrow, fat, grease, and also many diseases.[162]

The Upanishads seem to have known the importance of the heart as the pumping station from which all the limbs of the body received their quota of blood. The Bṛhadāraṇyaka tells us that inside the heart there is an empty space where there is a blood-lump and a network of channels called Hita. These are very thin, like a hair split a thousandfold and through them flows that which flows.[163] Their number has been given as hundred and one,[164] or seventy-two thousand.[165] The Praśna Upanishad correlates the two numbers thus—"There are the 101 arteries and in each of them, there are a hundred, and for each of these branches, there are 72,000."[166] The fluid which flows through them is different in colours—Śukla, Nila, Piṅgala, Harita, Pīta and Lohita.[167] Sometimes they are taken to be the vessels through which the *Vyāna* breath moves.[168]

One of the channels is described as going up to the crown of head. One became immortal by going upward through it.[169] The Maitrāyaṇī gives it the name *Sushumnā*.[170]

That which hangs down between the palates like a nipple, is called the birthplace of Indra.[171] The eye is described as having the pupil and the dark iris. There is the white eye-ball, red lines and water in between the lower and the upper eye-lashes.[172]

Describing the digestion-system the Chāndogya says: "Food—when eaten—becomes threefold—its coarsest portion becomes the faeces, its middle portion flesh and its subtlest portion mind. Water when drunk becomes threefold—its coarsest portion becomes the urine, its middle portion the blood and its subtlest portion the breath. Meat when eaten becomes threefold—its coarsest portion becomes bone, its middle portion marrow, its subtlest portion speech."[173] It was believed that when a man was hungry, water was carrying away what had been eaten by him; and when he was thirsty, fire was carrying away what had been drunk by him.[174]

The horse has been described in detail in the Bṛhadāraṇyaka. It mentions the head, eye, mouth, back, belly, chest, sides, ribs, member, joints, feet, hooves, bones, flesh, blood vessels, liver, spleen, lungs, hairs, etc. Probably the dismembering at the sacrificial ceremonies helped produce such minute details.[175]

The physiological features might not always tally with modern knowledge, but it shows an awareness and intensity.

The diseases, *āmaya*[176] or *vyādhi*,[177] have found mention, but nothing more dreadful than eczema seems to have troubled an Upanishadic person.[178] Raikva is seen, sitting in the shade, scratching his sores.[179] Consumption was a dreaded disease and seems to be hinted at in the Bṛhadāraṇyaka when it says that if one challenged the person who had realized the greatness of Prāṇa, one shrivelled away and died in the end.[180] The Kaushītaki Upanishad mentions people who were deprived of their eye-sight, hearing, arms or legs and also those who were sick and dying as falling into weakness and faintness.[181]

The physician, *Bhishak*, was known from the days of Ṛgveda.[182] The divine physicians—Aśvins—had not only treated dreadful diseases, given youth and vigour to the old, but had also performed miracles. They had replaced a leg lost in the war and had exchanged Dadhyaṅ's head with that of a horse, so that he could have his own head when Indra cut off

the equine one. This latter involved a double surgery. First, the original head was removed and kept safe while a horse's head was sewn on. Dadhyaṅ taught the Madhu-vidyā with the horse's head. Indra who had forbidden him to teach anyone, cut it off and the Aśvins replaced the original head.[183]

Even if this story is to be taken with a grain of salt, there is no denying the fact that the idea of transplanting limbs had already occurred to the Vedic Indian, although it materialized only recently.

The Upanishads do not tell us much about the diseases and the potions concocted by the physicians to cure them. The Brāhmaṇas show that they relied mostly on nature. "Within water is heat."[184] "Fire or heat is the medicine to restore life."[185] Some plants and herbs with medicinal properties must also have been used. They were great believers in fasting.[186] Then also, by the time of the late Upanishads, like Śvetāśvatara and Maitrāyaṇī, physicians were helped by Yoga. The practice of Yoga freed a man from illness, old age and death. It resulted in lightness, healthiness, steadiness, a good complexion, easy speech, sweet odour and slight excretions.[187]

The sound hygienic habits of the Upanishadic people helped them in keeping fit. Daily bathing, cleansing the mouth before and after every meal, washing both the hands and feet after defaecating were considered necessary. Women were kept apart from the household chores for a few days every month, for hygienic purposes. The segregation of the newly-born baby and its mother must have proved to be a check on infant mortality.

Furniture and Utensils

The Bṛhadāraṇyaka describes Janaka Vaideha on a throne known as *Kūrca.*[188] The Kaushītaki describes the throne of Brahman, *Āsandi,* as having four feet, two length-wise pieces and two cross-pieces. It seems to be devoid of a back-rest. The *Paryaṅka* has four feet, two length-wise pieces and two raised head pieces. It is woven with cords stretched length-wise as well as cross-wise. There is a cushion placed over it, a coverlet and even a pillow.[189]

The Chāndogya mentions a treasure-chest which has the

sky for its circumference, the earth for its bottom, the quarters for its sides and heaven its lid above. Everything is placed within it.[190]

The Brāhmaṇa and Āraṇyaka texts mention many other items of household furniture, like seats, swings, etc.[191]

The Upanishads occasionally mention a few pots and pans. The references are very few and far between. They do not give a complete picture of the pottery types of the time. What few names are mentioned therein are generally in association with rituals and do not give us an insight into the household pottery of day to day usage.

The utensils mentioned in the Upanishads are of three types—the wooden, the metallic and the earthenware. The wooden implements were used in the rituals. The Bṛhadāraṇyaka mentions a *kaṁsa* made of the Udumbara wood.[192] Usually the Kaṁsa was a metal utensil. Then again the wood of the Udumbara tree was used as fuel and churning sticks. The ladle, *sruvā* and cup, *camasa*, were also made of Udumbara wood.[193]

The Brāhmaṇas, elaborating upon the ritualistic performances, had more occasions to tell us about the utensils. The Śatapatha mentions various kinds of spoons and ladles, the pestle and many other pots of wood.

Metal implements were costlier and were used where direct contact with fire was necessary. The Bṛhadāraṇyaka mentions fire-tongs, *Angārāvakshayaṇa*.[194] To remove burning coals from the fire, as indicated by the name, it must have been made of iron or some other metal. A metallic Kaṁsa was forbidden to a woman in her monthly sickness.[195] When a baby was born, the *Pṛshadājya*, i.e. curds and clarified butter, was put in a Kaṁsa and offered in the fire.[196] Two vessels called *Mahimā* were kept before and after the horse in the Aśvamedha sacrifice.[197] We know from the details of Aśvamedha in the Brāhmaṇas that these two were made of gold and silver respectively.

Most of the pots storing water or grain were made of clay. Sometimes they were left unbaked and were called *Āmapātra*[198] and sometimes they were baked. The *Udapātra*, *Udakumbha* and *Udasarāva* mentioned in the Upanishads were made of clay.[199] The *Sthālī* was also made of clay.[200] It was the usual cooking pot, famous for the dish *Sthālīpāka* made in it.

Two other vessels—*Upāṅśu* and *Antaryāma*—are mentioned in the Maitrāyaṇī Upanishad.[201] They were probably variants of the Camū or the *graha-patras* which were used to hold the crushed Soma.[202]

The Brāhmaṇa texts mention some implements made of stone, like the mortar part of the *Ulūkhala-musala* or the *Dṛshadupalā*;[203] some made of leather, like the bag or pouch for storing grains, *Bhastrā*[204] or fluids, *Dṛti*;[205] and others of wicker-work like the winnow basket, *Śūrpa*[206] or mats, *Bhitti*.[207]

As opposed to all these sacrificial paraphernalia, were the household utensils, *Pārīṇahya*, which were in the charge of the wife.[208]

Miscellany

The bow and arrow seem to have been popular weapons. They are often used to illustrate philosophical points.[209] Gārgī describes a youth of the Kāśī-Videhas, holding a highly-strung bow and two foe-piercing arrows.[210] The Maitrāyaṇī Upanishad also describes a warrior holding a bow and arrow.[211] But it seems they were held more for the sake of appearance than the demand of the occasion.

The Śvetāśvatara mentions a *dīpa* but does not mention its size or components.[212] Fire was produced by rubbing the underwood, *araṇi* and the stick together until a spark was produced.[213]

The Upanishads mention five seasons—Vasanta, Grīshma, Varshā, Śarat and Hemanta.[214] The sixth, Śiśira, is sometimes named along with Hemanta.[215] The lunar eclipse is pictured as the moon entrapped in the mouth of Rāhu.[216] Some male constellations[217] and the Sampāta[218] are also mentioned.

The Kāla or Saṁvatsara, standing for time, were often meditated upon as the finite Prajāpati or the infinite Brahman. The Bṛhadāraṇyaka tells us that Prajāpati is the year and it consists of sixteen digits. The nights are his fifteen digits and the fixed point, his sixteenth. He is increased and decreased by the nights. Having, on the new moon night, entered with that sixteenth part into everything that breathes, he is born thence in the morning.[219] The Praśna also identifies the year with

Prajāpati. He has twofold ways—the southern path going to the moon and the northern one going to the sun. He has five feet in the seasons, twelve forms in the months seated in the high heavens, full of water. Or else, he is sitting on a chariot with seven wheels and six spokes.

The month is Prajāpati with his dark half and bright half as Rayi and Prāṇa and he is the day and night with day as Rayi and night as Prāṇa.[220]

The form of time is the year. One half of it, when the sun moves towards the north, belongs to Agni and the other half to Varuṇa. From the asterism Magha to half of Sravishṭhā belongs to Agni and from Sarpa to half of Śravishṭhā belongs to Soma. Among these, each month includes nine quarters according to the corresponding course of the sun through the asterism. Because of its subtlety, the course of the sun is the proof, for only in this way is time proved. One who worships time as Brahman, from him time moves very far.

Brahman has two forms—time and the timeless. That which is prior to the sun is timeless, but that which begins with sun is time or year. These creatures are produced from the year, they grow by it and disappear in it. Therefore, the year is Prajāpati, time, food and Brahman.[221]

The Vedic metres, specially Gāyatrī, come in for their share of glory.[222]

One interesting feature of the Upanishads is their love for the erotic. Right amidst the most profound thinking about the indestructibility of the soul, the path followed by the soul after the body has ceased to be, there follows the most intimate description of the sexual act.[223] Vāmadeva, who has sometimes been credited with the origin of the Lokāyatas, has been found closely associated with such erotic descriptions.[224]

The ancients knew how to enjoy love without fear of conception. Apparently birth control is not a modern device.[225]

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1. Bṛhad. IV.3.33 स यो मनुष्याणां शद्धः समृद्धो भवति अन्येषां अधिपतिः सर्वैर्मानुष्यकैर्भोगैः सम्पन्नतमः स मनुष्याणां परमानन्दः ।
2. Taitt. II.8 युवा स्यात्साधु युवाध्यायकः आशिष्ठो दृढ़िष्ठो बलिष्ठः तस्येयं पृथिवी

सर्वा वित्तस्य पूर्णा स्यात् ।

3. Chānd. VII.24.2 गो अश्वमिह महिमेति आचक्षते, हस्ति हिरण्यं, दासभार्यम् क्षेत्राण्यायतनानि इति ।
4. Kaṭha I.1.23-24.
5. Chānd. II.11.
6. Ibid. I.10.1.
7. Chānd. IV.2.4.
8. Ibid. V.10.3 ग्राम इष्टापूर्ते दत्तमित्युपासते । cf. Bṛhad. VI.2.16.
9. Chānd. VIII.24.2; Kaṭha I.1.23.
10. Chānd. VIII.1.1; Ait. II.1.5; Muṇḍ. II.2.7.
11. Ait. II.1.5 पुरः आयसी ।
12. Chānd. VIII.1.1 अथ यदिदमस्मिन्ब्रह्मपुरे दहरम् । Kaush. I.3 सालज्यं संस्थानम् अपराजितमायतनम् ।
13. Śat. Br. IX.5.2.15; XIII.5.4.2-7; Ait. Br. VIII.23.3.
14. Bṛhad. II.1.1; Kaush. IV.1.
15. Ghosh, *The City in Early Historical India*, p. 10, fn. 27.
16. Ibid., p. 18.
17. Bṛhad. II.4.2; IV.5.13; VI.2.13.
18. Kaush. IV.20.
19. Ghosh, op. cit., p. 11.
20. Y.D. Sharma, *Archaeological Remains, Monuments and Museums*, p. 44.
21. Bṛhad. IV.2.1; 3.10; Chānd. VIII.6.2.
22. Ibid. IV.3.10.
23. Chānd. VIII.1.1; Ait. II.1.5; Kaush. I.3.
24. Ibid. IV.2.1; Bṛhad. III.1.1.
25. Ibid. VI.1.6.
26. M.S. Pandey, Potteries in Brahmanical Literature, *Potteries in Ancient India*, pp. 155-69; N.R. Banerjee, *Indian Prehistory*, 1964, p. 204; op. cit., 1965, p. 235, fn. 33; Ghosh, *The City in Early Historical India*, p. 6, fn. 15.
The *Āma* and *Nīla lohita* wares mentioned in AV IV.17.4 have been identified with the unbaked-looking P.G.W. and B.-&-R.W. respectively. Sāyaṇa explains that pottery which was made in fire-kiln, where the fire was *nīla* due to emission of smoke and *lohita* due to burning, thus explaining the process of carbonization and oxidization that went into the making of B.-&-R.W.
27. Kaṭha 1.1.15.
28. One each fragment of burnt-brick from Hastināpura and Ahicchatra does not provide conclusive evidence.
29. Ait. invocation; Chānd. II.24.10.
30. Śat. Br. III.5.1.
31. Vibha Tripathi, *The P.G.W.: An Iron Age Culture of Northern India*, pp. 113-5.
32. Kaush. IV.1.
33. Chānd. VI.15.
34. Bṛhad. III.7.1.
35. Chānd. V.11.3.
36. Bṛhad. III.1.1.
37. Bṛhad. IV.2.1.
38. Bṛhad. II.5.15; Kaush. III.8; Kaṭha I.3.3-9; Śvet. I.4; Mait. II.6, etc.
39. Kaṭha I.3.3-6; Mait. II.6.
40. Chānd. IV.2.1.
41. Ibid. IV.1.8; Mait. II.3.
42. Bṛhad. IV.3.35.
43. Śat. Br. I.1.2.5-13; III.3.4.9-10.
44. Chānd. loc. cit. सोऽधस्ताच्छकटस्य पामानं कषमाणमपोपविवेश ।
45. Supra.
46. Bṛhad. I.1.2.
47. Ibid. V.14.8 हस्ती भूतो वहसि ।
48. Śat. Br. III.1.3.4—न हस्तिनं प्रतिगृह्णीयात् ।
49. Bṛhad. IV.2.1; Muṇḍ. I.2.7; Śvet. II.8.
50. RV I.182.5. The earlier litera-

ture, specially RV shows greater knowledge of sea and seafaring.
51. Bṛhad. I.1.2; Muṇḍ. II.1.8-9; Chānd. VI.10.1.
52. Chānd. VIII.4.1-2; Kaṭha I.3.2; Muṇḍ. II.2.5.
53. Taitt. III.2 अन्नं ब्रह्मेति व्यजानात् ।
54. Ibid. III.7-8 अन्नं न निन्द्यात् । अन्नं न पश्चिक्षीत ।
55. Chānd. I.3.6.
56. Muṇḍ. I.1.8 तपसा चीयते ब्रह्म ततोऽन्नमभिजायते ।
57. Praśna I.14 अन्नं वै प्रजापति··· तस्मादिमाः प्रजाः प्रजायन्त इति ।
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59. Ait. I.3.
60. Chānd. IV.2.5.
61. Kaṭha I.1.8.
62. Bṛhad. I.4.16-17.
63. Chānd. IV.1.1.
64. Ibid. VI.7.6.
65. Mait. VI.9 आत्मन्येव यजतीति ।
66. Chānd. V.2.2; Brhad. VI.1.14; Mait. VI.9.
67. Bṛhad. VI.3.13.
68. Ibid.
69. Chānd. I.10.2.
70. Śat. Br. I.1.1.10.
71. Bṛhad. VI.3.13; Chānd. III.14.3; V.10.6.
72. Ibid. VI.4.14-18.
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75. Chānd. V.2.4-7.
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77. Śat. Br. I.2.1-2.
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80. Śat. Br. XI.7.2.1.
81. Ibid.
82. Ibid. III.1.2.21.
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87. Śvet. I.15 तिलेषु तैलं ।
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89. Chānd. VII.3.1.
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91. Chānd. VI.12.1-2.
92. Bṛhad. I.3.24 राजानं भक्षयन् ।
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99. Mait. IV.2.
100. Chānd. V.11.5.
101. Śat. Br. III.3.3.2.
102. Bṛhad. II.3.6 पाण्डवाविकम् ।
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104. Bṛhad. loc. cit. महारजनं वासः ।
105. Mait. VII.9 वृथाकषायकुण्डलिनः ।
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108. Bṛhad. IV.4.5.
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110. Bṛhad. VI.4.14-18; Chānd. VIII.6.1; Kaush. IV.19.
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132. Ibid. II.22.1 विनर्दि साम्नो वृणे पशव्यमित्यग्नेरुद्गीथोऽनिरुक्तः प्रजापतेः निरुक्तः सोमस्य, मृदुश्लक्ष्णं वायोः, श्लक्ष्णं बलवदिन्द्रस्य, क्रौञ्चं बृहस्पतेः अपध्वान्तं वरुणस्य ।
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135. Bṛhad. V.10.1.
136. Kaṭha I.1.25.
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172. Bṛhad. II.2.2.
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174. Ibid. VI.8.3-5.
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176. Mait. III.4.
177. Chānd. IV.10.3; Bṛhad. V.11.1.
178. Chānd. IV.1.8.
179. Roth, *Zur Literature des Veda*, p. 36; teste Max Muller, *S.B.E.*, I, p. 57 points out that it was curious that the AV (V.22.5.8) relegated *Takman*, apparently a disease of the skin, to the Mahāvṛshas, where Raikva dwelt.
180. Bṛhad. I.5.21.
181. Kaush. III.3.
182. Mait. VI.13.
183. Bṛhad. II.5.17; RV I.117.22.
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CHAPTER VII

Economy

Agriculture

It has been said that the Aryans entered the portals of this country as semi-nomadic pastoralists, living chiefly on the produce of cattle.[1] But they took to agriculture soon enough, for even the Ṛgveda gives plenty of evidence of agriculture. It talks about the plough, the ploughman and the plough-mark.[2] People have tried to reconstruct a rudimentary irrigation system and the use of manure as well.[3] But those are based on meagre evidence.

By the time of the later Saṁhitās and the Brāhmaṇas, it had become a full-time job, with two harvests a year[4] or more. The Taittirīya Saṁhitā mentions that barley, sown in winter, ripened in summer; rice, sown in the rains, ripened in autumn but beans and sesamum ripened later, in winter.[5] The Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa talks of people living on the exploits of land[6] and shows that where there is more vegetation, there is more chance of wealth.[7] It sums up the agricultural process as 'ploughing, sowing, reaping and threshing'.[8] The Brāhmaṇa texts are full of domestic rites, synchronising with every stage of agriculture: rites for ploughing, sowing, growth of corn, timely rains, exorcising the pests and so on, up to the stage of reaping and enjoying the fruits of a harvest for the first time.

As against the beginning of agriculture in Vedic India, when the entire range of cultivated grains was covered by the

word *Yava*, the Upanishads know about a wide variety of village plants, *grāmya dhānya*. The Bṛhadāraṇyaka mentions ten such grains as Vrīhi, Yava, Tila, Māsha, Aṇu, Priyaṅgu, Godhūma, Masūra, Khalva and Khalakula.[9] The Chāndogya adds Sarshapa and Śyāmāka.[10]

The Upanishads do not tell us anything about the agrarian pursuits, but the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa has proved to be a veritable storehouse of information. It gives us to understand that marshy and barren land could be made fertile by burning.[11] As regards the irrigation system, it seems that in spite of people's claim to the contrary,[12] it was not developed and the majority depended, as it does even today, on timely rains. The Praśna Upanishad shows that when it rains, people become happy that there will be food according to their desire.[13]

The cultivators had to face troubles in the form of too much or too little rains as well as hailstorms, swarms of locusts and other pests. The Chāndogya knows of a time when the land of the Kurus was sadly afflicted by a hailstorm or an invasion by the locusts and even affluent people were forced to eat bad grain.[14]

Cattle-Rearing

Even before the advent of agriculture, cattle-rearing was the chief preoccupation of the Aryans. Not only cows and bullocks but horses, sheep and goats, mules, donkeys and dogs were reared. The Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa tells us that animals are verily wealth, they are Pūshan and Yajña.[15] That person is rich whose animals outnumber his dependents.[16]

The Upanishads also think very highly of the animals. The Chāndogya describes Hiṅkāra as the goats, Prastāva as the sheep, Udgitha as the cows, Pratihāra as the horses and Nidhana as men.[17]

Cows and bullocks were regarded as prized possessions. The Ṛgvedic terminology includes several words derived from the cow. Thus, *Gavishṭi*, literally meaning 'to search for cows', came to mean 'to fight' probably because the Aryan tribes impinged upon the pastoral rights of their neighbours or filched their cows, so that the initial search party had to fight

off the offender. *Gotra*, literally 'cow-pen', also means the exogamous clan unit. It seems the cattle belonging to a family must have been enclosed within a cow-pen and gradually the form of property imposed its name upon the social unit owning it. Another such word was *Duhitṛ*, denoting daughter. It is derived from the root *duh*, 'to milk' and it is quite possible that the daughter of the house was allotted the job of milking the cows.

The Brāhmaṇa texts abound in references to cows. The cow is called Aditi and Prithivī.[18] It is the source of income and people depend on it for their living. The Śatapatha alone gives hundreds of stories about the cow.

The Upanishads show the cow as a measure of value, a very precious commodity and an invaluable possession. The kings gave away thousands of cows as prize-money or tutor's fees.[19] The brāhmaṇa householders gave away cows as sacrificial fees.[20] The students tended their teacher's cows.[21] A man's position in society was determined by the number of cattle he kept. In the order of merit, cattle stood second only to offspring. In order to dissuade Naciketas from his third boon, Yama offers his sons and grandsons, who shall live a hundred years, herds of cattle, elephants, gold and horses, in that order.[22] The Chāndogya also promises long life, greatness with children and cattle and great fame to one who knows the Gāyatra chant.[23] The Kaushītaki proclaims that meditation makes a man "full of offspring, cattle, fame . . . and reach the full term of life.[24] The Chāndogya again prays to secure immortality for the gods, offerings for the manes, hope for men and grass and water for cattle.[25]

The increasing popularity of agriculture enhanced the value of cattle. Oxen were used for ploughing and furrowing and cow-dung served as the most easily procurable manure.

Keeping pace with the changing times, the bull came in for his share of preaching. It taught Satyakāma Jābāla, a foot of the Brahman.[26]

A feeling of reverence for the cow was growing. Although beef-eating was not prohibited, it was said that cow and bull together fill up this earth and therefore should not be eaten.[27] It was perfectly true. The oxen helped the farmers fill up their barns with grain and the cows provided such a wide

variety for the table that it was indeed criminal to kill them in their prime.

If the cow predominated the home front, then the horse held the pride of place in warfare. It was yoked to the chariot and was the swiftest mode of transport. The Upanishads mention good Saindhava horses,[28] bad horses,[29] fresh, impatient horses tearing up their tethers[30] and so on. The Bṛhadāraṇyaka describes the anatomy of a horse as the universe.[31] The horse was highly venerated at the Aśvamedha sacrifice. Mules were also yoked to chariots and carriages.[32]

Avi and *Aja*, sheep and goats, were reared for wool, meat and milk.[33] *Chāga* was sacrificed, its meat was cooked on the sacrificial fire and was partaken of by the priests and the *yajamāna*.[34]

The dogs occur in a seemingly satirical passage of the Chāndogya Upanishad,[35] but the Upanishadic people must have found them of great help for guarding their sheep, cattle and fields.

Bees and honey are often mentioned[36] but it is not known whether they were kept for commercial purposes or not.

Trade and Commerce

From agriculture to trade is but a short step. Brāhmaṇa and Kshatriya had their own duties of praying and protecting, respectively, therefore, it fell to the lot of Viś to till the land. Those who amassed fortunes out of agriculture took to trade, for they now had the leisure and capital to indulge in speculation. They were called *Vaṇik*[37] and *Śreshṭhin*[38] and held an exalted position over the cultivators, who were considered plebeian in comparison.

It is interesting to note here the origin of the word *Vaṇik* as traced by Kosambi.[39] He is of the belief that trader, the modern *bania*, comes from the Sanskrit Vaṇik, which in turn has no known origin except in *Paṇi*, the main non-Aryan people, mentioned in the Ṛgveda as wealthy, treacherous and covetous. Further, coin is *Paṇa* in Sanskrit; trade-goods and commodities, in general, are *paṇya*. The earliest weight-standards for Indian coins are exactly those of a definite class of weights at Mohenjodaro, not standards prevalent in Persia

or Mesopotamia. It would seem that some Indus people survived Aryan rapacity to continue the old tradition of trade and manufacture.

A historical parallel can be found in the Jewish money-lenders, who survived the repeated attacks of the Romans and are depicted as 'wealthy, treacherous and covetous' by the records of the time.

The significance of the word Śreshṭhin is also to be noted. The traders had become so wealthy that they were almost the Śreshṭha, i.e. the most important people in the kingdom. The term is, in actual fact, derived from the superlative form of super and pre-eminent. A Śreshṭhin was a financier, sometimes the head of a trade guild, and his standing was such that even despotic rulers treated him with respect. *Śraishṭhya*,[40] according to the *Vedic Index*, is not merely the foremost place but definitely 'the presidency of a guild'. A positive assertion or denial as to the existence or organization of guilds in the Upanishadic times is difficult, although it might be safely assumed, from the evidence of the Dharma-Sutras and Pali literature, that they existed soon after the Upanishads. Majumdar firmly believes in the existence of trade guilds or at least "a fairly developed form of corporate activity in economic life",[41] on the basis of a passage in the Bṛhadāraṇyaka.[42]

It stands to reason that cloth, skin of various animals, wool, metals and their finished products, food-grains, cattle, horses, and such like were the commodities of trade and commerce. The Upanishad texts give a definite proof of a trade-contact when they mention Saindhava Khilya[43] and Saindhava horses.[44] Seemingly, salt and horses were brought from the Sindhu region to the Ganga-Yamuna Doab. But what, in turn, was exported to the former region, is not known.

Generally, trade must have been restricted to local areas, though people are seen travelling far and near in quest of knowledge. If Gārgya Bālāki could trudge all the way from the land of the Uśīnaras to the Satvat-Matsyas, the Kuru-Pañcālas and the Kāśī-Videhas[45] and if Uddālaka Āruṇi could foot it from the Kaikeyas and the Madras to the Kuru-Pañcālas and the Videhas,[46] so could the trading caravans. They even had a choice of securing a chariot or a boat.[47] The rivers acted as natural highways of trade and had numerous

settlements along their banks as markets or trading posts. Hence, the importance of Kāśī.

The sea and ocean-going vessels were known as early as the Ṛgveda;[48] the Brāhmaṇas know that the ocean swells round the earth,[49] even the Upanishads know of the eastern and western seas[50] and several types of vessels,[51] yet nothing can be said about the maritime trade activities without reverting to conjecture. One such conjecture leads Basham to say that there is evidence in later Vedic literature itself of faint contacts with Mesopotamia, notably in the Indian flood-legend and that after a break of many centuries Indian merchandise was again finding its way to Mesopotamia.[52] As such, it should be regarded as a conjecture, unless proved otherwise by more convincing evidence.

Upanishadic references to any kind of buying and selling or to a monetary or barter system are practically nil. The only instances, where an exchange of any kind is suggested, are when the cows are handed over as prize money or sacrificial fees. However, the early Vedic literature shows that barter was the common practice in trade and cow was the unit of value in large-scale transactions.[53] The Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa is more explicit. It described the purchase of Soma in exchange for cow, gold and a pair of goats.[54] A token bargaining is suggested. The Soma is weighed, bargained for and ultimately bought.[55]

It seems gold—Hiraṇya, as a precious metal, served as a unit of value, along with the cow. It can only be conjectured that the gold pieces mentioned in this connection were of uniform weight and design. If so, then they certainly were the precursors of coinage, which came into existence around the 5th century B.C.

The word *Nishka* mentioned in the Chāndogya Upanishad brings out an interesting possibility. If the gold pieces used in the Soma-sacrifice were indeed of uniform weight and shape, then they might have been the prototypes of coins and might have been known by the name Nishka.[56]

The Bṛhadāraṇyaka mentions ten *Pādas*, tied to the horns of each of the thousand cows, kept aside as prizes.[57] This again poses a problem. We do not know, for sure, whether these pādas were just pieces of gold or served some specific purpose.[58]

It seems coinage was in the formative stage. Pieces of gold served as a token currency along with cows and other animals. But it was not long before a more regular system of coinage was evolved and made popular.

Occupations and Industries

The four Varṇas were arranged according to their respective functions. It was the duty of the brāhmaṇas to act as minister and adviser to the king and as teachers, priests and spiritual guides to the people. The Kshatriyas were entrusted with protection, administration and maintenance of law and order. Agriculture, trade and commerce were mainly in the hands of the free commoners—the Vaiśyas, whereas the Śūdras were ordained to serve the upper three classes. The intermingling of classes and the classification of labour gave rise to numerous different callings and occupations.

The Vājasaneyī Saṁhitā describes the Purusha medha ceremony wherein as many as seventy people of different class and occupation are offered as victims.[59] Some of the Brāhmaṇa texts follow suit.[60] As compared to them the Upanishads mention about thirty professions at the most. This does not show a fall in the number of callings and specializations. It is mainly due to the type of literature we are dealing with. The Upanishads are philosophical in nature and do not have occasion to list the professions. Any information in the matter comes from similes and metaphors when psychological and metaphysical ideas are propounded in terms of everyday phraseology. The Yajurveda and its Brāhmaṇas are liturgical texts. They are more concerned with people and their practices. Therefore, it is natural for them to give details regarding the people following different occupations.

The Upanishads mention different classes of priests—Hotā, Udgātā, Adhvaryu and Brahmā, as also Prastotā and Pratihartā,[61] but do not go into further classifications like Śamitā, Carakādhvaryu, etc. Besides the king and his personal servants,[62] there were officials like Ugra, Pratyenasa, Sūta and Grāmaṇī,[63] Dūta, Goptā, Saṁśrāvayitā and Pariveshṭrī,[64] Kshattā or Dvāragopa.[65] The peasants are not mentioned in the Upanishads but the eleven *grāmya dhānya*, referred to by

the Bṛhadāraṇyaka,[66] prove their existence. Every householder was the proud possesser of cattle, horses, sheep and goats and could be termed as a pastoralist, but the Chāndogya specifically mentions Gonāya, Aśvanāya and Purushanāya.[67] There is talk of a Śākunika, who is not the bird-catcher of later times, but a fisherman.[68] The Śreshṭhin was there to look after the financial side,[69] although his function is not made clear in the context.

There were miners,[70] metal-workers[71] and goldsmiths.[72] The Maitrāyaṇī alludes to the potter and his wheel.[73] The weaver is known through the mention of his warp and woof[74] and the leather-worker through the mention of hide.[75] The way chariots and bows keep cropping up to illustrate philosophical points,[76] shows the popularity of these commodities and the importance of their makers.

When viewed side by side with the Vājasaneyī Saṁhitā's list of seventy professions, the Upanishadic list seems to be a very limited one. But we have no reasons to believe that the professions were becoming any less lucrative or popular. If anything, they were becoming even more so, with the process of growing economy and urbanization in northern India. There were specialists and experts in every field.

Thus, in order to present a complete picture of the occupations and industries of the Upanishadic period, we have to take into account the previous records also.

The agriculturists included ploughmen, sowers, menials, winnowers and grinders.[77] The pastoralists consisted of the game-keepers who saw to it that the forests and game were not destroyed through the agencies of the fire and poachers.[78] There were people who looked after cows, horses, sheep, goats, elephants and dogs.[79] There were bird-catchers and fishermen.[80] The mention of bees and honey hints at an apiarian industry.[81] The tradesmen included the metal-smiths. There were miners, smelters and those who specialized in one metal like the goldsmith.[82] The carpenter had an assistant in the wood-gatherer who brought in wood from the forests.[83] Much importance was attached to the makers of chariots and bows.[84] The elevated position enjoyed by the grooms and the charioteers is apparent from their inclusion in the lists of the eight Vīras[85] and the eleven Ratnins.[86]

The potter and his wheel are mentioned in the Maitrāyaṇī Upanishad.[87] The textile industry was principally a women's concern. The references to weaving, dying, knitting, sewing or embroidery are almost always connected with female workers.[88] The furriers, tanners and leather-workers made their appearance.[89] The basket-weavers, rope-makers and workers in thorns (Kaṇṭakīkārī) are also mentioned.[90]

The personnel associated with transport included those who drove chariots, carriages and carts.[91] There were boatsmen and rowers.[92]

The physical needs of people were looked after by the barber, washerman, cook, waiter, housekeeper and physician.[93]

The royal entourage has already been discussed in a previous chapter.[94]

Besides all these vocations, there was also another very lucrative profession, that of the financier, entrepreneur and money-lender, the Bekanāṭa of the Ṛgveda, the Vaṇik of the Atharva Veda and the Śreshṭhin of the Brāhmaṇas.[95]

Arts and Crafts

It is not clear what the texts mean by the use of the word *Śilpa*. Two passages in the Kaushītaki and the Aitareya Brāhmaṇas give two different meanings. The Kaushītaki Brāhmaṇa indicates the meaning 'art' when it enumerates three śilpas as dancing, singing and playing of musical instruments.[96] On the other hand, the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa seems to take śilpa to mean 'craft' when it names five śilpas as Hasti, Kaṁsa, Vāsa, Hiraṇya and Aśvatarīratha.[97] Basu explains them as toy-making, glass work, weaving, works of gold and chariot-making.[98] The Maitrāyaṇī Upanishad mentions people who are always hilarious, always making a living by the śilpas, as being at par with thieves and unworthy of heaven.[99]

The arts, specially fine arts like music, dancing, etc., have been an inseparable part of human life since time immemorial. Right from the Ṛgveda we find mention of singers and flute-players.[100] The Yajurveda mentions musician, drum-beater, lute-player and pole-dancer.[101] The Upanishads also mention, besides the ritualistic singers, people who play the Vīṇā, Lambara, Tūrya, Śaṅkha and Dundubhi.[102] The Maitrāyaṇī

mentions a painted wall and an actor changing his dress within a moment.[103]

The crafts, as detailed in the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa, included toy-making, glass-ware, weaving, gold-working and making carriages.[104] Among these, the callings of the weaver, the gold-smith and the chariot-wright were quite well-developed. Toy-making would also have been a popular industry. The fifth craft *Kaṁsa* might not represent the glass-ware industry at all because the term Kaṁsa, where it occurs in the Brahmanical and Upanishadic texts, means a kind of bowl, made of metal and used for sacrifices. The kaṁsa, therefore, might stand for the utensil-industry.

Much could have been said about the achievements of the Upanishadic people in the sphere of arts and crafts if the culture represented by the Upanishads could be associated with any measure of certainty with actual archaeological finds. The two disciplines, brought together, would have made it possible to complete the picture.

Literary evidence shows the use of metals. The Chāndogya knows of *Lavaṇa*—salt or borax, *Suvarṇa*—gold, *Rajata*—silver, *Trapu*—tin, *Sīsa*—lead, *Loha*—copper, as also *Dāru*—wood, and *Carma*—leather or hide.[105] *Ayas* is qualified as *Lohāyas* or Lohamaṇi and *Kṛshṇāyas*.[106] Gold is reported to be obtained from river-beds but mines were also tapped for other ores.[107] The raw metal was then smelted and smiths made innumerable articles from them, probably by casting. The alternate method of hammering was also known and practised. The Maitrāyaṇī shows that "a ball of iron, pervaded (overcome) by fire, and hammered by smiths, becomes manifold."[108] Amulets of copper, nail-scissors of iron and vessels and scabbards made of gold have found mention in the Upanishads.[109]

A specialized branch of the smithy was that of the chariot-wright, and even that had specialists who made only some part or the other like the wheel or the felly. Chariots were very dear to the Aryan heart. The Upanishads are full of passages where the most profound philosophical ideas have been expressed through the metaphor of chariot.[110] No fewer than ten such examples could be cited, the most famous being the comparison of the chariot to the human body, with the

senses as the horses, mind as their reins, intellect as the charioteer and Self as the owner.[111]

The Śvetāśvatara gives details of the chariot-wheel as having one felly—Nemi with three tyres, sixteen ends, fifty spokes, and twenty counter-spokes and six sets of eight.[112] The Kaushītaki gives a simpler version: the spokes are fixed on the nave and the felly is fixed around the spokes.[113]

The carpenters and wood-workers got their material from Dārvāhāra, the wood-gatherers. Most of the house-building material came from the carpentry. There were wooden pegs and nails, wooden posts and door jambs.[114] Furniture consisted of couches, beds, chairs, thrones, swings.[115] Much of the sacrificial paraphernalia was also the handiwork of the carpenter. It included the sacrificial posts, ladles, utensils, etc. The bow and arrow, also the work of specialists like those who made the bows, the bow-strings and the arrowheads, came in for their share of philosophical explanation. The Muṇḍaka gives parallels—

"Hold up the bow of the Upanishads along with the arrow, sharpened by meditation, draw it with a mind engaged in contemplation and hit the target of the imperishable Brahman."

And again—"the syllable Om is the bow, Ātman the arrow and Brahman the target."[116]

The textile industry was run principally by women. The Vedic and Brahmanic terms for weaver, dyer, tailor, embroiderer and even washerwoman are all feminine. What is more befitting than that Gārgī's questionnaire is based on the warp and woof.[117] The Taittirīya Upanishad describes the goddess Śrī as bringing clothes, cattle, food and drink.[118] It seems the womenfolk had the monopoly of the trade.

The potter and his wheel are mentioned in the Maitrāyaṇī Upanishad.[119] He must have been an indispensable member of society. Metal was too precious a commodity to be used lightly for household purposes. It was the potter's handiwork which served even the mighty kings. The sacrifices used all three—wooden, earthen and metalware. The Upanishadic people can be said to have been the authors of the Ochre Coloured Pottery or the Painted Grey Ware. The mention of wheel shows that their pottery could have been wheel-turned.

Leather work was known from the earliest times. The texts

suggest the use of hides from the Ṛgveda onwards. The hides of deer, goats and cows or oxen were used in various rituals.[120] Ox hide was turned to many uses, such as the manufacture of bow-strings, slings and reins. Food-grains were sometimes stored in skin-bags. The tanner—*Carmamna* was known as early as the Ṛgveda.[121] As to the actual process of tanning the Ṛgveda mentions the wetting of the hide[122] and the Śatapatha refers to stretching it out with pegs.[123]

An analysis of these specializations in trade and industry shows that the process of urbanization was under way. Some of the occupations, such as those of Vaṇik,[124] Śreshṭhin,[125] Śailūsha[126] and Naṭa[127] were particularly urban in nature. The Vaṇik could well have been the intermediary between the village and city for he was neither the producer nor the consumer and still was a trader of sorts. The Śreshṭhin, who is said to have been 'the head of a guild', definitely proves a developed phase of business transactions. The Śailūsha and Naṭa must have come into existence for the entertainment of the city-dwelling populace which had the means and leisure to enjoy their art.

The mention of the word *pura*,[128] both as a fortification and a city, as different from grama and araṇya, goes on to prove the point. The Brāhmaṇa texts refer to six cities of the Kuru-Pañcālas by name. These are Kāmpilya, Kauśāmbī, Paricakrā, Āsandīvant, Kārotī and Mashṇāra.[129] The name of Kāśī is recorded in the Bṛhadāraṇyaka and Kaushītaki Upanishads.[130]

This clearly indicates that the process of urbanization had already begun, although it was only in the initial stage. The age of the Buddha saw the spread and growth of these urban centres all over northern India.

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36. Ibid. VI.9.1; Praśna II.4.
37. RV I.112.11; V.45.6; AV III. 15.1 etc.; Śat. Br. I.6.4.21; Pañc. Br. XVII.1.2.
38. Ait. Br. III.30.3; Kaush. Br. XXVIII.6; Kaush. IV.20.
39. Kosambi, *The Culture and Civilization of Ancient India in Historical Outline*, p. 80.
40. Chānd. V.2.6; Kaush. II.6; IV. 15; 20.
41. Majumdar, *Corporate Life in Ancient India*, pp. 9-10.
42. Bṛhad. I.4.12.
43. Ibid. II.4.12; IV.5.13.
44. Ibid. VI.2.13.
45. Kaush. IV.1.
46. Chānd. V.11; Bṛhad. III.7.1.
47. Bṛhad. IV.2.1.
48. RV I.116.5: a sea without beginning (shoreless), non-stationary (i.e. billowing or stormy) and without hold (bottomless); I.182.5: big vessels, propelled by a hundred oars, and having sails fixed to six masts and fit for sailing on high seas.
49. Ait. Br. VIII.25.1.
50. Bṛhad. I.1.2.
51. *Nāva*—Bṛhad. IV.2.1; *Plava*—Muṇḍ. I.2.7; *Uḍupa*—Śvet. II.8.
52. Basham, *Wonder that Was India*, p. 44.
53. *Vedic Age*, p. 399.
54. Śat. Br. III.3.3.18.
55. Ibid. III.2.3.7; 2.4.7; 3.2.9-17; etc.
56. Some scholars (cf. *Vedic Index* SV Niskha) are of the opinion that Nishka signified a gold coin and later it came to mean a necklace made of these coins. There are others (cf. Majumdar, *Ad. Hist. of Ind.*, p. 45) who believe that Nishka was formerly a necklet and later it came to mean a lump of gold possessing a definite weight equal to 320 *ratis*.
57. Bṛhad. III.1.1.
58. Śaṅkara tells us that pāda is a quarter of a *pala*. Max Müller (*S.B.E.*, XV, p. 121) accordingly translates it as a 'measure of value'. Radhakrishnan (*The Princ. Upas.*, p. 211) renders it as a 'coin of gold' and Madhavananda specifies it as 'about a third of an ounce'. Pāṇini knows of Pāda as a coin.
59. Vāj. Saṁ. XXX.7.
60. Śat. Br. XIII.
61. Chānd. 1.1.8-9; 10.9-11.

62. Bṛhad. VI.2.1.
63. Ibid. IV.3.37-8.
64. Kaush. II.1.
65. Chānd. IV.1.5; Kaush. I.5.
66. Bṛhad. VI.3.13.
67. Chānd. VI.8.3.
68. Mait. VI.26.
69. Kaush. IV.20.
70. Mait. VI.28.
71. Ibid. III.3.
72. Bṛhad. IV.4.4.
73. Mait. II.6; III.3.
74. Bṛhad. III.6; 8.
75. Śvet. VI.20.
76. Chānd. III.13.8; Bṛhad. II.5.15; Kaush. III.8; Kaṭha I.3.3-9; Muṇḍ. II.2.3-4; Mait. II.6; etc.
77. *Kināśa, Vapa, Purusha, Upala-prakshiṇī*, etc. Vāj. Saṁ. loc. cit.
78. *Vanapa*—ibid.
79. *Gopāla, Aśvapa, Avipala, Aja-pāla, Hastipa, Śvanin*—ibid.
80. *Puñjishṭha, Dhīvara*—Vāj. Saṁ. loc. cit.; *Śākunika*—Mait. VI.26.
81. Chānd. VI.9.1; Praśna II.4.
82. *Karmāra, Dhmātṛ, Hiraṇyakāra* —Vāj. Saṁ. loc. cit.
83. *Dārvāhāra*—ibid.
84. *Rathakāra* and *Dhanushkāra*.
85. *Sūta* follows Mahishī and precedes Grāmaṇī in Pañc. Br. IX.1.4.
86. Taitt. Br. I.7.3.1; Śat. Br. V. 3.1.5.
87. Mait. II.6; III.3.
88. *Vayitrī*—Pañc. Br. I.8.9; *Sirī*—RV X.71.9; *Rajayitrī* and *Peśaskarī*—Vāj. Saṁ. loc. cit.
89. *Ajina-saṁdhāya*—Vāj. Saṁ. XXX.15.
90. *Bidalakārī, Rajju-sarja* and *Kaṇṭakīkārī*—ibid.
91. *Sārathī, Yantṛ, Samgṛhītṛ*—ibid; *Sayugvan*—Chānd. IV.1.
92. *Nāvāja*—Sat. II.3.3.5; *Śambin*—AV IX.2.6; *Aritṛ*—RV II. 42.1; etc.
93. *Nāpita, Malaga, Paktṛ, Śrapayitṛ, Gṛhapa, Bhishak*—Vāj. Saṁ. loc. cit.
94. Supra.
95. RV VIII.16.10; AV III.15.1; Ait. Br. III.30.3; Kaush. Br. XXVIII.6; etc.
96. Kaush. Br. XXIX.5.
97. Ait. Br. VI.30.1.
98. Basu, *India of the Age of the Brahmanas*, p. 70.
99. Mait. VII.8 नित्यप्रमुदिता नित्यप्रवसिता नित्ययाचनका नित्यं शिल्पोपजीविनः·····प्रकाश्यभूता वै ते तस्करा अस्वर्ग्या इति ।
100. RV X.135.7.
101. *Vīnāvāda, Tūṇavadhma, Śaṅkhadhma, Vaṁśa-nartin* — Vāj. Saṁ. XXX.7.
102. Bṛhad. II.4.7-10; V.10.1; Kaṭha I.25.
103. Mait. IV.2 नट इव क्षणवेषम् चित्रभित्तिरिव मिथ्या मनोरमम् ।
104. Ait. Br. VI.30.1.
105. Chānd. IV.17.7.
106. Ibid. VI.1.6.
107. Śat. Br. II.1.1.5; Mait. VI.28.
108. Mait. III.3.
109. Chānd. VI.1.6; Īśa 15; Muṇḍ. II.2.10.
110. Chānd. III.13.8; Bṛhad. II. 5.15; Kaush. III.8; Kaṭha I. 3.3-9; Mait. II.6; etc.
111. Kaṭha I.3.3-9.
112. Śvet. I.4.
113. Kaush. III.8.
114. *Śaṅku, Aṇi, Parigha*.
115. *Āsandī, Paryaṅka*—Kaush. I.5; *Kūrca*—Bṛhad. IV.2.1.
116. Muṇḍ. II.2.3-4.
117. Bṛhad. III.6; 8.
118. Taitt. I.4.2.
119. Mait. II.6; III.3.
120. Śat. Br. I.1.4.1; III.6.3.18; etc.

121. RV VIII.5.38.
122. RV I.85.5.
123. Śat. Br. II.1.1.9.
124. Ibid. I.6.4.21; Pañc. Br. XVII. 1.2.
125. Kaush. IV.20.
126. Vāj. Saṁ. XXX.6; Taitt. Br. III.4.2.1.
127. Mait. IV.2.
128. Ait. II.1.5; Chānd. VIII.1.1; Kaush. I.5.
129. Śat. Br. IX.5.2.15; XIII.5.4.2-7; Ait. Br. VIII.23.3.
130. Bṛhad. II.1.1; Kaush. IV.1.

CHAPTER VIII

Religion

Scholars—theologians and philosophers—tell us that man, although the most gifted of all creatures, was still insignificant when compared to the limitless expanse of the universe. He could control his fellow-creatures—the dog, the cattle and the horse; could kill his enemies—the wild beasts; but was absolutely helpless when it came to making the sun rise, the wind blow or the clouds precipitate. The phenomena of nature followed a set pattern and try as he would, man could not change it. This led him to think that the power in the sun or the moon, the wind or thunder, was mightier than him and he thought of them as the luminous ones, the *devas*. Once he had accepted their superiority, he sang their praises and strove to please them. The Ṛk and Sāman Saṁhitās record the praises, the Yajus Saṁhitās and the Brāhmaṇas record the mode of worship and the Atharva Veda records the popular beliefs.

The Upanishads record the philosophical thinking of the era. But there are enough references to gods and rituals to reconstruct the religious life of the time. Much of the religious beliefs and practices have been inherited from the Saṁhitā and the Brāhmaṇa eras but there are divergences and developments too.

Mythology

The Ṛgvedic gods showed various stages of personification and deification. Most of the gods had corresponding physical

phenomena, e.g. the sky and the earth—*Dyāvāprithivī*, the dawn—*Ushas*, the sun in various positions in the sky—*Savitṛ*, *Sūrya*, *Pūshan*, *Āditya*; the rain-cloud—*Parjanya*, the fire—*Agni* and so on. Some of them had progressed from the stage of mere personification to that of deification, e.g. Indra, Varuṇa, the Aśvins, etc. Their corresponding phenomenon in nature was not so transparently apparent. The lists included some abstract deities like Apāṁ Napāt, Ahirbudhnya, Kshetrasya Pati, etc.

In the later Saṁhitās and the Brāhmaṇas, most of the Ṛgvedic gods were still prominently worshipped but the sacrifices and their paraphernalia were promoted to the status of gods. The sacrifice, fuel, ladle, sacrificial post, the beast tied to it as also the sacrificer and the officiating priests, were all raised to temporary godhood. Prajāpati, the first sacrificer, was the most important deity of the era.

By the time of the Upanishads, the concept of gods had acquired a new dimension. There had been evolved a God of gods, a Supreme Being who was not only the chief of the gods like Indra, nor merely their father and creator like Prajāpati, but was the guiding principle behind them, who willed them to perform their duties. This concept of a paramount god was arrived at after much philosophical speculation and after passing through the stages of polytheism, monotheism and monism. The supremacy enjoyed in the Ṛgvedic times by Indra and Varuṇa and in the Brahmanic period by Prajāpati and the sacrifice was handed over, on a silver platter, to Brahman. So much so that Indra and Prajāpati were relegated to the post of doorkeepers in the palace of Brahman.[1]

The Upanishads describe the gods as *Prājāpatyaḥ*—the offspring of Prajāpati, along with the asuras and men.[2] They were constantly at war with the asuras, who were elder and probably more in number.[3] The asuras were gaining over the devas. They were afraid of death and destruction. So, they sought protection in the *trayī-vidyā*—the knowledge of the three Vedas. This was not able to protect them as the asuras saw them and attacked again. They then covered themselves with the *Udgītha* and were saved.[4] At other places also the gods are shown as weak and unable to protect themselves from the

sheer brute strength of the asuras. It was only through the knowledge of Self[5] or the help of Brahman, that they were able to overcome the asuras.[6]

The Upanishadic *devas* are not shown performing any astonishing feats of derring-do but are referred to as the sage-counsellors of peace time, invoked to impart knowledge. Most of them seem to have taken up the teaching profession. The classical example is that of Yama initiating the Gautama youth Naciketas into the mysteries of life after death and the permanent nature of the Soul.[7] Prajāpati is entreated by the representatives of devas and asuras to tell them the truth about Self.[8] Indra is approached by Pratardana for the 'only knowledge worth knowing'.[9] Agni, Pūshan, Varuṇa, and Umā are invoked by people not for any material benefit but for True Knowledge.[10]

The gods are shown as bound by social conventions. They are subjected to the caste-system and are divided like men into four categories. Agni represents the Brahma; Indra, Varuṇa, Soma, Rudra, Parjanya, Yama, Mṛtyu and Īśāna represent the Kshatra; the groups of gods like the Vasus, Rudras, Ādityas, Maruts and Viśvedevas comprise the Viś and Pūshan makes up the Śūdra.[11] They also conform to the Āśrama theory by implication. First, there is Indra, who spent several years as a brahmacārin at the āśrama of Prajāpati.[12] Secondly, Yama is admonished by his wife for forgetting his duty as a householder in looking after his guest in a proper and befitting manner.[13] The third stage, that of the Vānaprasthin, is hinted at when Prajāpati is shown as an elderly sage dwelling in the forest.[14]

The Upanishadic descriptions of the gods leave much to imagination. The humane quality of the Ṛgvedic hymns is missing. Details regarding the physical attributes of the gods, their likes and dislikes, small fads and foibles are not to be found in the Upanishadic passages. One has to make do with sweeping statements like—

"They did not eat or drink but enjoyed by seeing."[15]

or

"The gods always love a mystery."[16]

Only at some places faint personifications are to be found, e.g. "that golden person who is seen within the sun, has a golden

beard and golden hair. All is golden, to the tips of the nails."[17] But such instances are very rare.

The number of gods is given variously in the Upanishads as 33, 303 or even 3003. The Bṛhadāraṇyaka[18] clinches the matter thus—

Then Vidagdha Śākalya asked him: "How many gods are there, Yājñavalkya?"

He answered, in accord with the following *nivid* (invocation of the gods): 'As many as are mentioned in the *nivid* of the hymn of praise to the Viśvedevas, namely three hundred and three and three thousand and three.'

'Yes', he said, 'but how many gods are there, Yājñavalkya?'

—'Thirty three'.

'Yes, but how many gods are there, Yājñavalkya?'

—'Six'.

'Yes, but how many gods are there, Yājñavalkya?'

—'Three'.

—'Yes, but how many gods are there, Yājñavalkya?'

—'Two'.

'Yes, but how many gods are there, Yājñavalkya?'

—'One'.

'Yes, said he, 'but which are those three hundred and three and three thousand and three?'

Yājñavalkya said, 'They are but the manifestations of them, but there are only thirty three gods.'

'Which are these thirty three?'

'The eight Vasus, the eleven Rudras, and the twelve Ādityas, these are thirty one. Indra and Prajāpati—thirty three.'

'Which are the Vasus?'

'Fire, the earth, the air, the sky, the sun, the heaven, the moon, the stars, these are the Vasus for in them all this is placed, therefore, they are called Vasus."

'Which are the Rudras?'

'These ten breaths in a person with the mind as the eleventh. When they depart from this mortal body, they make us weep. So because they make us weep, therefore, they are called Rudras.'

'Which are the Ādityas?'

'Verily the twelve months of the year, these are Ādityas, for they move carrying along all this. Since they move along carrying all this, they are called Ādityas.'

'Which is Indra? Which is Prajāpati?'

'Indra is the thunder, Prajāpati is the sacrifice.'

'Which is the thunder?'

'The thunderbolt.'

'Which is the sacrifice?'

'The animals.'

'Which are the six?'

'Fire, the earth, the air, the sky, the sun and the heaven, these are the six, for the six are all this.'

'Which are the three gods?'

'They are, verily, the three worlds, for in them all these gods exist.'

'Which are the two gods?'

'Food and breath.'

'Which is the one and a half?'

'This one here who blows (the air). Regarding this, some say, since he who blows is like one, how then is he one and a half? (The answer is) because in him (when he blows) all this grew up.'

'Which is the one God?'

'The breath, He is Brahman. They call him *tyat*, that.'

The entire idea of divinity has been summed up by Yājñavalkya in this passage. He admits that in the beginning there was an uncertainty regarding the total number of gods. Some thought there were three hundred and three gods whereas others believed in three thousand and three. The tendency of polytheism still survives in the Upanishads when a passage refers to countless gods—*anantāḥ Viśvedevāḥ*.[19] But out of these unlimited ranks there emerged a few classes of gods. Gods with common traits were grouped together and formed a class of gods, sharing a common name, e.g. the eight Vasus, the eleven Rudras or the twelve Ādityas.

The gods have been arranged into three categories—

(i) Terrestrial—Pṛthivī, represented by Agni
(ii) Aerial—Antariksha, represented by Vāyu or Indra
(iii) Celestial—Dyaus, represented by Āditya.

The idea of these three different spheres had already occurred to the Ṛgvedic seers,[20] but the division was more pronounced in the Upanishads. When asked who the six gods were, Yājñavalkya had mentioned Agni, Pṛthivī, Vāyu, Antariksha, Āditya and Dyaus, which were clearly the three spheres and their representative deities.[21] They are mentioned again in the Chāndogya Upanishad.[22] The same text, however, tells us that the first part of a man's life, the first twenty-four years, are connected with the Vasus, the second part, the next forty-four years with the Rudras and the next forty-eight years with the Ādityas.[23] This triad also represents the three spheres. Vasu means wealth or life and the wealth, according to the Aryan way of life, consisted of the cattle, the field and the descendants. All this belonged to the earth, therefore, the Vasus also. The Rudras always come under the aerial category and the Ādityas always belong to the celestial. The morning oblations are offered to the Vasus, the mid-day oblations to the Rudras and the third to the Ādityas and Viśvedevas.[24]

Some kind of system of hierarchy among the creatures of this universe is to be found in the Taittirīya Upanishad which enumerates the human beings, human gandharvas, deva gandharvas, the manes, Ājānaja-devas, Karma-devas, devas, Indra, Bṛhaspati, Prajāpati and Brahman one after the other.[25] Elsewhere also, the order of seniority or popularity among the gods themselves shows Brahman at the top followed by Prajāpati and Indra. The Bṛhadāraṇyaka talks about the progressive ideas of bliss through the worlds of men, the fathers, gandharvas, Karma-devas, Ājāna-devas, Prajāpati and ultimately the permanent bliss of the Brahmaloka.[26] The Kaushītaki follows the path of the departed souls through the worlds of Agni, Vāyu, Varuṇa, Indra, Prajāpati and Brahman.[27]

Statistically, there are stages when one god or the other gains precedence over the rest. The first stage is represented by the Ṛgvedic era when Indra is the most oft-mentioned and greatest among all the gods. The next era is that of the later Saṁhitās and the Brāhmaṇas when the institution of sacrifice, and by association, Prajāpati steals the limelight. The third stage is that of the Upanishads when undoubtedly Brahman

is the highest god. If this pattern of popularity is analysed in a historical perspective, it will become clear that the importance of these particular deities at these particular times was a dialectic necessity. The Ṛgvedic era was a period of attack and advance, the Aryans were entering this country and progressing eastwards. They had to fight every inch of the way. There were wars against the aboriginal tribes and within the Aryans themselves. All this called for an object of worship with a warlike disposition and Indra filled the bill admirably.

With the settling of the tribes in well demarcated areas, the pastoral economy was supplemented by the agrarian. The petty skirmishes were given up in favour of peace and prosperity. The thankful people devoted more time to produce more and more and give some of it back to the gods as a token of affection and thanksgiving. This became the order of the day. Hence, the popularity of Prajāpati, the god connected with procreation and sacrifice.

By the time of the Upanishads, the Aryan tribes had more or less settled down. It was an age of settled economy, prosperity and reflection; with prosperity came leisure. Everybody did not have to do everything any more. Labour was classified and the priests and landed gentry had the means and leisure to think. Their reflections conjured up a being who did not do anything but who was responsible for all the deeds, who did not have feet but walked, who did not have eyes but saw, who did not have ears but heard.[28] Such was the greatness of this being that the more important ones among the devas were considered to be parts of him. The Chāndogya tells how Agni, Vāyu, Āditya and the quarters comprised the four feet of Brahman.[29] Brahman is called Brahmā, Vishṇu, Rudra, Prajāpati, Agni, Vāyu, Varuṇa, Indra, Moon, Food, Yama, the earth and the universe[30] but when these deities are taken for Brahman, they are emphatically and categorically denied the honour.[31] Neither the sun, moon, lightning nor ether, fire, air, water, mirror, sound, space, shadow or body can be called Brahman.[32] They are each only one aspect of the whole. Thus, Brahman emerged as the highest deity, the Supreme Power.

The Upanishadic gods can be arranged for convenience into five categories. These are—

(1) the major gods: Indra, Prajāpati, Vishṇu and Rudra;
(2) the elemental gods: Agni, Vāyu, Āpaḥ, Sūrya and Soma Candramas;
(3) the minor gods: Varuṇa, Yama, Bṛhaspati, Mātariśvan and Aśvin;
(4) the goddesses: Aditi, Śrī, Sarasvatī, Umā Haimavatī;
(5) the abstract gods: Prāṇa, Anna, Purusha, etc.

The Major Gods

Indra

Indra was the mightiest and the most mentioned god in the Ṛgveda. The Kaushītaki Upanishad gives us to understand that knowing him was the most beneficial boon for mankind.[33] He was a Kshatriya god[34] and was often shown as aiding and abetting the warriors. It is significant, therefore, that Pratardana Daivodāsi reached the beloved abode of Indra through courage and fight.[35] He himself was accredited with many feats of valour, some of which have found mention in the Kaushītaki, "I slew the three-headed son of Tvashṭṛ. I delivered the Aruṇmukhas, the devotees, to the wolves (śālāvṛkas). Breaking many treatises, I killed the people of Prahlād in the sky, the people of Puloma in the atmosphere, the people of Kālakañja on earth. And not one hair of me was harmed there."[36]

Indra's greatest achievement was the killing of Vṛtra, which won for him the title of Vṛtraghna or Vṛtrahā.[37] He was also known as Maghavan, Vṛddhaśravā and Vaikuṇṭha.[38] He is known to have had the capacity of changing forms at will. "Het ransformed himself in accordance with each form. This form of him was meant for making him known. Indra goes about in many forms by his Māyās, for to him are yoked steeds, hundreds and ten."[39] And again that "Indra, having become a bird, delivered them (the extinct Pārikshitas) to the air."[40]

The Taittirīya Upanishad shows Indra as the greatest in the Vedic hymns and as granting intelligence. "May that Indra, who is the greatest in the Vedic hymns, who is of all forms, who has sprung into being from immortal hymns, may

he cheer me with intelligence. O God! May I be the possessor of immortality."[41]

He is shown as the overlord of all the vowels. All vowels are embodiments of Indra. If one should reproach a person for his vowels, he should tell that one, 'I have taken my refuge in Indra. He will answer you.' All the vowels should be pronounced resonant and strong with the thought, 'may I impart strength to Indra'.[42] How this association of a valiant god with a manner of speech came about is a matter of conjecture. The Aitareya Āraṇyaka shows Viśvāmitra securing the beloved abode of Indra through chanting.[43] Probably a different approach to Indra's world was necessary for different classes of people. Where the Kshatriya Pratardana reached it by means of fighting, the brāhmaṇa Viśvāmitra reached it by chanting. This is hinted at by the Śatapatha which tells us that when Indra hit Vṛtra with his vajra, it broke into four parts—two of which became the sacrificial ladle and the post—*sphyā* and *yūpa* and the other two became the chariot and the arrow.[44] So, as Indra granted his followers the tools of their respective trades, so did he grant them admittance into his abode by virtue of following their own occupations—the brāhmaṇa by praying and the kshatriya by fighting. This reminds one of the promise made to his followers by Kṛshṇa in the Gītā.[45]

Indra is found associated with Agni and Vāyu in the Kena Upanishad and with Prajāpati in the Chāndogya and the Kaushītaki.[46] The Maitrāyaṇī Upanishad tells us how Bṛhaspati, having become Śukra, brought forth the knowledge for the safety of Indra and the destruction of the asuras.[47] This, surely, can be interpreted to mean that the god had no scruples in adopting foul means to serve his own ends. He is even quoted as having said that one who knew him thus, "by no deed whatsoever of his is his world injured, not by stealing, not by killing an embryo, not by killing his mother or his father."[48] Ethics and morality were never one of this god's strong points, but this is indeed taking things a bit too far. Hence the comedown! The very text which proclaims Indra to be the only one worth-knowing, goes on to deny him the right. It enumerates all the gods including Indra and says none of them are Brahman and therefore worth knowing.[49]

The greatness of Indra now depended on the fact that he was the first among the gods to realize the truth about Brahman. It is said that so long as Indra did not understand the Self, the asuras conquered him. When he understood it, he conquered the asuras and obtained pre-eminence, sovereignty and supremacy among the devas.[50] Indra, the mightiest, the sovereign and supreme lord was made gatekeeper at the palace of Brahman.[51] The growing popularity of extra-Vedic learning made him stay at Prajāpati's hermitage for a hundred and one years to learn the ultimate truth regarding the Self.[52]

Prajāpati

Prajāpati, who was mentioned only four times in the Ṛgveda, rose to the position of the most popular deity at the time of the Brāhmaṇas, due to his association with the creation of the universe and the sacrificial cult. There are innumerable little fables in the Brāhmaṇas where Prajāpati features as the benevolent patriarch, to whom they all turn in their distress. He settled their disputes and allotted their respective positions in the sacrifice. The gods, the manes, the demons and men, they were all his offspring, although he was inclined to favour the gods.

There were two main aspects of his personality: Prajāpati, the creator—*Viśva Prajāpati* and Prajāpati, the Sacrificer—*Kratu Prajāpati*.[53] To these, the Upanishads add another facet, Prajāpati, the knowledgeable. But, first and foremost he is the creator god, connected with procreation and progeny. The Upanishads also present him in this role. He protected the embryo in the womb. He created woman in order to provide semen with a firm basis. He was invoked at the time of conception.[54]

The Praśna Upanishad tells us that when desirous of offspring, Prajāpati observed abstinence and from his abstinence were born the pairs: Prāṇa and Rayi, male and female, and the pairs, then, gave birth to whatever exists on the earth.[55] Another story of creation relates that Prajāpati brooded over the worlds and squeezed out the earth, sky and heaven and their representative deities—Agni, Vāyu and Āditya, as also the Ṛk, Yajus, and Sāman.[56] Other stories which give Ātman

or Sat or Water as the Creating Agency do not fail to bring Prajāpati into picture.[57]

His close connections with the institution of Sacrifice are not very well defined in the Upanishads. The Brāhmaṇa texts identified Prajāpati with Yajña. He was the first sacrificer and also the first to be sacrificed. He was associated with Agni who was sometimes said to have been his son, born from Prajāpati and sometimes his father, because he nourished Prajāpati.[58]

The Upanishads present Prajāpati in a new role: the knower of Self and Brahman. He is made out to be the first recipient of the Brahman-knowledge in the Bṛhadāraṇyaka and of the Madhu-Vidyā in the Chāndogya.[59] He taught the Madhu-Vidyā to Manu, the Brahma-Vidyā to Atharva and again to the Vālikhilyas.[60] People desirous of knowledge went to him and lived with him for long periods.[61]

Prajāpati had a super-existence in the Brāhmaṇas, he was the thirty-fourth god, over and above the regular thirty-three,[62] but in the Upanishads, he was cut down to size and was included in the primary thirty-three.[63] He had so far occupied the seat of the benevolent patriarch, to whom everybody turned in times of stress, but now Brahman dethroned him. He was turned out of the palace and stood guard at the door.[64]

Prajāpati was gradually being identified with Brahman (in its masculine form). The Muṇḍaka Upanishad describes Brahma as the first of the devas, the maker of the universe, the preserver of the world, who told the Brahma-vidyā to his eldest son Atharva.[65]

Vishṇu

Vishṇu was a deity of the solar group and his most prominent deed was to take three strides, across the earth, the sky and the heaven. He rose to pre-eminence in the Brāhmaṇas with his identification with Yajña.[66] Various items and actions connected with sacrifices were also linked to him, e.g. the sieve was named after him and the fuel-sticks were known as Vishṇu's forelocks.[67]

The Upanishads do not mention Vishṇu very often. When the gods are enumerated, Vishṇu seldom finds a place among

them. In the Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upanishad, when Yājñavalkya explains the number and hierarchy of the gods, Indra, Prajāpati, Agni, Vāyu, Āditya, etc. find mention but Vishṇu does not grace the list.[68] In the Kaushītaki Upanishad, Gārgya Bālāki gives the names of several gods whom he considers to be Brahman, among them are Āditya, Candramas, Vidyut, Indra, Ākāśa, Agni, Yama and Prajāpati, but again Vishṇu is conspicuous by his absence.[69]

He is mentioned only three times in the Upanishads. The Taittirīya Upanishad quoting a Ṛk verse alludes to the wide-stepping Vishṇu.[70] The Kaṭha refers to the 'highest place of Vishṇu'.[71] It might be mentioned here that the Ṛgvedic descriptions say that out of the three strides of Vishṇu, two are visible, while the third is beyond the ken of even the birds. It is the source of Madhu.[72] That highest place is his favourite dwelling, where are also the gods and pious men. That very place is promised to one who knows the truth about the Self by the Kaṭhopanishad.

The Maitrāyaṇī shows the later day concept of Trimūrti: Brahmā, Vishṇu and Śiva. Vishṇu is described there in almost the same terms as those in which the Gītā describes Kṛshṇa.[73]

Rudra

Rudra, who had only three hymns devoted to him in the Ṛgveda, gained popularity in the Yajurveda. He punished Prajāpati for his incestual relations with his own daughter in the Brāhmaṇas and was more dreaded than admired. His name is derived from *rud*, to weep and signified the howling of winds during a storm.[74] He killed cattle and men.[75] His mother or sister Ambikā is known from the texts. The Kena Upanishad mentions Umā Haimavatī,[76] who was later presented as the wife of Śiva, the peaceful and benevolent aspect of Rudra.[77] His eight forms are known as Rudra, Śarva, Paśupati, Ugra, Aśani, Bhava, Mahadeva and Isana.[78] He is of Āditya Varṇa or Ravi-tulya-rūpa.[79]

The Praśna Upanishad mentions him as the protector.[80] The Śvetāśvatara glorifies him as the highest principle on the one hand and on the other bestows upon him all the characteristics of a personal god.[81] He was already on his way to becoming the originator of the Śiva cult when he was

described in glorious terms in the Śatarudriya hymn of the Yajurveda and had become so in the Atharvaśiras Upanishad. The Śvetāśvatara says—

"Truly Rudra is one, there is no place for a second, who rules all these worlds with his ruling powers. He stands opposite creatures. He, the protector, after creating all worlds, withdraws them at the end of time. That one God, who has an eye on every side, a face on every side, an arm on every side, a foot on every side, creating heaven and earth forges them together by his arms and his wings. He who is the source and origin of the gods, the ruler of all, Rudra, the great seer, who of old gave birth to the golden germ (Hiraṇya-garbha), may He endow us with clear understanding."[82]

The Elemental Gods

In this category can be placed those gods whose corresponding elemental phenomena are quite in evidence.

Agni

Fire is a tangible aspect of nature, like the sun. Its elemental as well as deified forms are alluded to in the Upanishads. The most vivid description is to be had from the Muṇḍaka Upanishad which presents fire as the goddess with seven tongues of flame.[83] Fire is the messenger between men and the gods on one hand and between men and the manes on the other. He is called *Havyavāhana*, when taking oblations to the gods, and *Kavyavāhana*, when taking the *darvī* offering to the manes.[84] Every householder was expected to keep three kinds of domestic fires burning in his hearth, namely *Gārhapatya*, *Āhavanīya* and *Anvāhāryapacana*.[85] The Brāhmaṇas laid great importance on propitiating the fire, as without its active support the entire idea of sacrifices was null and void. Agni lay hidden in the two fire-sticks, well-protected like the child in the womb.[86] The students always approached the teacher with fuel in hand, signifying thereby their readiness to tend the household fires.

Agni was also closely associated with the dead. The Bṛhadāraṇyaka shows how the dead body was committed to fire.[87] The Īśa Upanishad also invokes the fire god to lead

a person to wealth by a good path and to remove all obstacles.[88] The Chāndogya shows that the two paths of the dead were distinguished—one led through bright light of fire, and the other through smoke.[89] Even Kaushītaki, which gives the moon as the gateway to heaven, mentions Agniloka as the next stop.[90]

The Bṛhadāraṇyaka list of the gods includes Agni in the eight Vasus. When enumerating the six gods it gives Agni, Pṛthivī, Vāyu, Antariksha, Āditya and Dyaus.[91] These six, the three spheres and their representative deities occur in many places.[92] The Bṛhadāraṇyaka tells us that Agni alone among the devas belongs to the brāhmaṇa class, but the Brāhmaṇas sometimes make him out to be a kshatriya.[93] He is the deity of the fixed quarter, *dhruvā dik*, according to the Bṛhadāraṇyaka and of the eastern quarter according to the Chāndogya.[94] Agni is associated with the Vasus here.[95] Agni is made out to be subordinate to Vāyu, inasmuch as when it goes out, it enters the air.[96] It is one of the aspects of the fourfold Brahman.[97] It performs its duties through fear of Him and cannot burn even a stick when the power of Brahman is withdrawn from behind him.[98] He can change forms, according to will, like Indra, Vāyu and Sūrya.[99]

Agni, whose chief claim to fame was the important part played by him in the rituals, succumbs to the lure of learning in the Upanishads. He teaches Satyakāma Jābāla the four aspects of Brahman as Pṛthivī, Antariksha, Dyaus and Samudra;[100] and again cryptically explains Brahman to Upakosala Kāmalāyana as "Life is Brahman, Joy is Brahman, Ether is Brahman".[101] People are afraid of his wrath: Yama's wife admonishes him to administer to the comforts of Naciketas, for she says "Vaiśvānara Agni himself enters the house in the form of a brāhmaṇa guest and takes away all the wealth and pleasure if he remains unfed."[102] Satyakāma's wife is also concerned that the pupil even after tending the fires well, for twelve long years, has not been taught. "Teach him", she advises, "lest the fires blame you."[103]

Vāyu

Vāyu might have become a force to reckon with in the days of epics and Purāṇas (his popularity granted him the

parenthood of the monkey hero Hanumān) but as far as the Upanishads are concerned, he was quite powerless without the help of Brahman. He had boasted to the Yaksha that he could blow everything on earth, yet could not move a stick when asked to do so.[104] But among the gods he could hold himself. Agni said "I shall burn". Āditya held "I shall warm". Candramas said "I shall shine". And thus also the other deities each according to his divine function. And as it was with Prāṇa among the breaths, so it was with Vāyu among those. The other deities fade, not Vāyu. Vāyu is the deity that never sets.[105] He is called the Pratyaksha, i.e. the visible or perceptible Brahman.[106] The Chāndogya records him as the end of everything, for when the fire goes out it goes into air, when the sun goes down it goes into air, when the moon goes down it goes into air, when water dries up it goes into air.[107] The Kaushītaki tells us that when fire, sun, moon or lightning die, their life goes to the air, but having entered the air, though dead, they do not vanish; and out of the very air they rise again.[108]

Vāyu is said to be one aspect of the four-footed Brahman.[109] He is the representative deity of the aerial sphere, the Antariksha.[110] Besides being enumerated among the 33 gods and the 6 gods, he is also spoken of as the one-and-a-half. Śākalya asks, "Which is the one-and-a-half (god)?" Yājñavalkya replies, "This one here who blows (the air) . . . in him all this grew up."[111]

This places him on the highest rung but one of the hierarchical ladder.

Āpaḥ

The waters are sometimes put in the category of gods[112] and sometimes regarded as the creative power.[113] The Bṛhadāraṇyaka mentions that only the waters existed at first. They created Truth—Truth—Brahman, Brahman—Prajāpati, who in turn created the devas.[114]

Sūrya

The sun, variously known as Sūrya, Savitṛ, Pūshan, Āditya and in the plural as the eleven or twelve Ādityas, makes its appearance in almost all the principal Upanishads.

Of all the gods of the Vedic pantheon, the sun is closest to nature, the most tangible one. Its rising and setting occurs without fail and indicates the presence of a cosmic order. In the human or divine body it is usually identified with the eye.

Sūrya is the concrete aspect of the sun. The Upanishads mention the rising and setting of the sun from fear of Brahman.[115] The pious departing from this world are conveyed to the world of Brahman, through the gates of the sun.[116] Sūrya is often mentioned as the eye.[117]

Savitṛ is the stimulator or the instigator. The ritualistic acts are preceded by the words "we do this with the inspiration of Savitā".[118] He is that aspect of sun which awakens man to his work and the priest to his sacrifice. He is spoken of as the golden one, having golden eyes, hands, arms and tongue. The Śvetāśvatara quotes several verses from the Taittirīya Saṁhitā praising Savitṛ.[119]

"Savitṛ first controlling mind and thought for truth, discerned the light of Agni (Fire) and brought it out of the earth.

With mind controlled we are under the command of the divine Savitṛ that we may have strength for (obtaining) heaven.

May Savitṛ, having controlled through thought the gods that rise upto the bright heaven, inspire them to make a great light to shine."[120]

Pūshan is invoked to remove the golden lid covering the nature of Truth and Dharma. He is addressed as the only seer, Ekarshi, Yama, Sūrya and the son of Prajāpati and is entreated to present his most benevolent aspect.[121] The Bṛhadāraṇyaka keeps him in the śūdra class.[122]

The Ādityas, numbering seven or eight in the Ṛgveda, become a larger group of twelve in the Upanishads. The Bṛhadāraṇyaka enumerates the twelve Ādityas among the thirty-three gods[123] and proclaims them to be Vaiśyas.[124] The Chāndogya allots them the third Savana along with the Viśvedevas.[125] They are connected with the western quarter with Varuṇa as their mouth. They are associated with the Sāmaveda.[126]

Āditya is highly venerated in the Chāndogya, an Upanishad connected with the Sāmaveda. Āditya is identified with

Udgītha.[127] He is given as the god of the Udgātṛ priest.[128] He is even said to be Brahman. "In the beginning this (world) was non-existent. It became existent. It grew. It turned into an egg. It lay for the period of a year. It burst open. Then came out of the egg—shell, two parts, one of silver, the other of gold. That which was silver is this earth; that which was of gold is the sky. What was the outer membrane is the mountains; that which was the inner membrane is the mist with the clouds. What were the veins are the rivers. What was the fluid within is the ocean. And what was born from it is this Āditya. When he was born, shouts and hurrays as also all beings and all desires arose. Therefore, at his rise and his every return, shouts and hurrays as also all beings and all desires arise."[129]

Soma-Candramas

The term Soma sometimes occurs for the plant Soma, or for the drink prepared from it.[130] At others it comes as a synonym of Candramas, the Moon.[131] As the Soma plant, it is called the king and people are shown consuming it, whereas, when in its lunar form Soma consumes all creatures. The Kaushītaki Upanishad notes—

Thou art Soma, the king, the wise, the five-mouthed, the lord of creatures. The brāhmaṇa is one of thy mouths, with it thou eatest the kings. The king is one of thy mouths, with it thou eatest the people. The hawk is one of thy mouths, with it thou eatest the birds. Fire is one of thy mouths, with it thou eatest this world. In thee there is the fifth mouth, with that mouth thou eatest all beings.[132]

Soma is seen associated with the Maruts, the northern quarter and the Atharvaveda.[133] He is connected with the well-defined Sāman.[134] In the human body he is represented by the ear,[135] or the two eyes are said to be the sun and the moon.[136] Manas is said to be its source.[137] It has also been identified with Anvāhāryapacana fire[138] and with the food.[139]

The moon plays an important role in the transmigration of the soul. The Kaushītaki tells us that all who depart from this world go to the moon. In the former half the moon delights in their spirit; in the darker half the moon sends them

to be born again. Verily the moon is the door of the Svarga-loka.[140]

The Minor Gods

Yama

Yama or Mṛtyu was the first mortal and therefore, the ruler of the world of dead. He is said to be the son of Vivas-vat, an aspect of Sūrya.[141] He had a twin sister in the Ṛg-veda, who wanted to have an incestual relationship with him, but to which he did not concede. His wife is mentioned in the Kaṭhopanishad.[142]

In granting Naciketas his third boon, that of describing life after death, he has given the *summum bonum* of Upanishadic philosophy. He was the first to realize the nature of the Individual soul and the World soul.[143] Therefore, it is curious to note that even he runs from fear of Brahman.[144]

Yājñavalkya puts Yama in the southern quarter with sacrifice as his support.[145] Elsewhere it is said there was nothing whatsoever in the beginning, everything was covered by Death or hunger for hunger verily is Death. He created *Manas* and from that everything else was created.[146]

He is said to be the lord of all consonants. If one should reproach a person for his consonants, he should tell that one, 'I have taken refuge in Death. He will burn you up.' All the consonants had to be pronounced slowly, without merging them together, with the thought 'May I withdraw myself from Death'.[147]

Varuṇa

Varuṇa, who was the aloof colossal figure sitting on judgment on men and gods alike, the cosmic law-giver in the Ṛgveda, had become a lost and lonely figure in the Upanishads.

The old quotations from the Saṁhitās still name him.[148] He is still invoked by people desirous of food[149] but somewhere along the line he lost his awesomeness.

He is associated with Mitra and the Aṅgirases.[150] He is said to be the deity of water.[151] Sometimes he is seen connected with the Ādityas, the western quarter and the

Sāman.[152] He is connected with the ill-sounding Sāman, and people are advised not to choose it.[153]

He is seen teaching his son Bhṛgu Vāruṇi.[154]

Bṛhaspati

Bṛhaspati is mentioned very rarely. The invocation at the beginning of the Taittirīya Upanishad mentions his name.[155] In the hierarchy of gods he sometimes comes after Prajāpati and before Indra and sometimes is ignored altogether.[156]

He is connected with the heron-like Sāman.[157] The Maitrāyaṇī gives a story involving him in fraud for Indra's sake. It tells us how Bṛhaspati, having become Śukra, brought forth that false knowledge for the safety of Indra and for the destruction of the Asuras.[158]

Mātariśvan

Any occasional references to Mātariśvan can be identified with Vāyu, since the Kena categorically calls Vāyu by the name Mātariśvan.[159] Prāṇa is called Mātariśvan in the Praśna Upanishad.[160]

He is said to bestow the waters or power upon the Self in Īśa Upanishad.[161]

Aśvin

The Aśvins are mentioned in connection with the Madhu vidyā, which they received from Dadhyañc Ātharvaṇa. They are called the terrible ones or the strong ones. They committed a terrible deed, called Daṁsa, out of greed. They cut off Dadhyañc's head and replaced it with that of a horse.[162]

The Goddesses

Aditi

Aditi who has been described in the earlier literature as the mother of all the gods, or particularly that of the Ādityas, makes a brief appearance in the Kaṭhopanishad. She is identified with the Self. 'Aditi who is one with all deities, who arises with Prāṇa, who entering into the heart abides therein, and was born from the elements, this is that.'[163]

The Bṛhadāraṇyaka gives an etymological interpretation of the word. 'Aditi is called so because at the time of creation, whatever was brought forth, the Creator—Mṛtyu wanted to eat it. Therefore, because she wanted to eat everything, that is why she is called Aditi.'[164]

Śrī

The Taittirīya Upanishad quotes an old verse about the goddess Śrī, describing the way she brings forth and spreads, making quickly for herself and the invoker, clothes, cattle, food and drink with woolly animals.[165]

Sarasvatī

Sarasvatī is remembered in the post-natal ceremony, by a Ṛk verse.[166] She is invoked to give her unfailing, refreshing, wealthy, abundant, generous breast, with which she nourishes all beings, to the mother, for the new-born baby to feed upon.

Umā Haimavatī

A new goddess makes her debut in the Kena Upanishad.[167] She is seen imparting knowledge to the gods, regarding Brahman, in accordance with the Upanishadic norms.

The Abstract Gods

Besides all these deities, several philosophical concepts also came to be regarded as gods, among them Prāṇa, Anna, Purusha, Udgītha and Om are worth-mentioning.

Prāṇa

Prāṇa has been often regarded as Brahman.[168] As life-breath within the human body, so Prāṇa among all deities, is the mightiest, without whom no other faculty can function properly.[169] Prāṇa with its variants—Samāna, Udāna, Vyāna, Apāna—occurs in almost all the principal Upanishads.[170] The Praśna sees all the gods in Prāṇa—You move in the womb and are born like Prajāpati. The people here bring you offerings. You are the chief bearer of offerings among the gods and the first offering among the fathers. You are character in the seers and truth in the Atharvāṅgirases.

You are Indra and Rudra. You move in the atmosphere and are the sun and the lord of the shining ones.[171]

Prāṇa is seen as the creative principle. The Purusha made Prāṇa from which were born faith, sky, air, light, waters, earth, senses, Manas, food, etc.[172]

Prāṇa is described as a king with mind as its *Dūta*, eye as the *Goptṛ*, ear as the *Samśrāvayitṛ* and speech as the *Pariveshṭrī*. They all bring him offerings, though he does not beg for it.[173]

Anna

Anna was the presiding deity of the ritualistic act of the Pratihartā priest.[174] It was one of the trio, Prāṇa-Vāk and Anna.[175] It is identified with Prajāpati by the Praśna Upanishad, which credits it with creation also.[176] The Muṇḍaka shows that when Brahman performed austerity, Anna was born and from it were born Prāṇa, Manas, etc.[177] The Taittirīya goes a step further and identifies it with Brahman.[178] It also puts up some rules—not to speak ill of Anna, not to despise it and to increase it.[179]

Purusha

The Primeval Being of the Ṛgveda has become secondary in the Aitareya Upanishad. It says that in the beginning only Ātman was there. Then he sent forth the worlds and in order to guard these worlds he formed the Purusha, taking him forth from the water. From him burst forth mouth, speech, fire, nostrils, scent, air; eyes, sight, Āditya; ears, hearing, Diś; skin, touch, trees and so on.[180]

The Muṇḍaka also shows that the Prāṇa, Manas, the senses, sky, air, light, waters and earth were born from the Purusha. Agni was his head, his eyes the sun and moon, the quarters his ear, the Vedas his speech, Vāyu his breath, the world his heart, the earth his feet and he himself was the Soul of all beings.[181]

The Bṛhadāraṇyaka describes the Purusha as a tree, with hair as leaves, skin as bark and blood as bark.[182] The Praśna describes the Purusha with sixteen parts.

Elsewhere, the word Purusha has been used to express the presence of Soul.[183] The idea of Prakṛti and Purusha, as

popularized by the Sāṁkhya philosophy is hinted at in the Śvetāśvatara Upanishad.[184]

The human eye, ear, speech and mind, with their cosmic counterparts, have been described as gods or even Brahman.[185] Saṁvatsara, the year and Kāla, the time are also regarded as superhuman agencies.[186] Uktha, Udgītha and the syllable Om are also spoken of as objects of meditation and contemplation.[187]

Upanishadic mythology includes some semi-divine or demonic figures in the Gandharvas,[188] Yakshas,[189] and Asuras.[190] The Maitrāyaṇī shows a longer list—gandharva, asura, yaksha, rākshasa, bhūta, gaṇa, piśāca, uraga and graha.[191]

Rituals

The acknowledged form of worshipping the Vedic and Brahmanic gods was to make offerings in fire. This trait was common in almost all primitive religions, thoughno where did it develop into such an elaborate art as in the Yajurveda and the Brāhmaṇas. These texts give sacrifice as the best of deeds, the best way to propitiate the gods.[192] Sacrifices were performed in order to achieve something, as thanksgiving or as a routine matter.

The Upanishads are mostly concerned with philosophical speculations and have little occasion to mention ritualistic details. However, available evidence points out to a continuance of the previous era. Sacrifices were still being performed, but at the same time meditation and austerity were held to be better modes of worship than mere works.[193] Most of the objects of contemplation have been put forward in the garb of sacrificial terminology which shows the popularity of the works. The sacrificial language proved to be an adequate framework upon which the more philosophical religion of the Upanishads came to be fashioned.[194]

The Upanishads mention sacrifice being performed in the countries of the Kurus, the Pañcālas, the Kekayas, the Videhas and by Vājaśravas Gautama.[195] The Brāhmaṇas proclaimed the land of the Kuru-Pañcālas as one where the best sacrifices were performed and the best speech enunciated.[196] The

Kuru-Pañcāla brāhmaṇas were still invited to far-off places for performing sacrifices.[197] But the Madras had also become famous as a centre of learning for the sacrificial cultus.[198]

The Upanishads clearly show that the priests were divided into four main categories—Hotā, Udgātā, Adhvaryu and Brahmā. They had their specific duties and were assisted by a host of other priests.[199] Hotā was the invoker, who invited the gods to take part in the proceedings, by reciting Ṛgvedic hymns. Udgātā sang the psalms of the Sāmaveda when the occasion demanded. Adhvaryu was the actual performer, who looked after the details in accordance with the rules laid down by the Brāhmaṇa texts.[200] Brahmā was the supervisor, who silently observed the procedure.[201]

The priests had to have a thorough knowledge of their particular offices for being selected as officiating Ṛtviks. The priests at the sacrifice of the Kurus were challenged by Ushasti Cākrāyaṇa, who told them that if they would perform their duties without the knowledge of their presiding deities, their heads would fall off. They did not know it, so Ushasti told them that Prāṇa was the deity of Prastotā, Sūrya of Udgātā and Anna of Pratihartā.[202] This does not agree with the description of Yājñavalkya, who linked Udgātā with Vāyu and Prāṇa, Hotā with Agni and Vāk, Adhvaryu with Cakshu and Āditya, and Brahmā with Manas and Candramas.[203] Baka Dālbhya is also said to have known Udgītha as Prāṇa.[204]

All the priests intoned the syllable Om, whether it was Adhvaryu giving orders, Hotā reciting or Udgātā singing.[205] Only Brahmā was the silent spectator. He did not speak after the morning litany and before the concluding recitation.[206] It was his duty to see that the sacrifice was not injured due to some fault or negligence on part of the performing priests. If there was some mistake on the Ṛk side, he offered oblations in the Gārhapatya fire, saying Svāhā to Bhuḥ. Similar oblations were offered in the Dakshiṇa and the Āhavanīya fires with Bhuvaḥ and Svaḥ, for mistakes in Yajus and Sāman. A sacrifice was considered well-healed where Brahma knew this.[207]

The Upanishads mention two performing priests by name. Baka Dālbhya was Udgātā at the sacrifice of the Naimishīyas.[208] Aśvala was Hotā at king Janaka's sacrifice.[209]

Ushasti Cākrāyaṇa reached the Kuru king just in time to be offered all priestly offices. He gave his consent but let the others do their jobs, claiming only the awards.[210] Uddālaka Āruṇi was invited by several kings to act as their priest, but he somehow always ended up as a pupil of philosophy rather than a performing priest.[211]

The Upanishads prescribe rites for attaining greatness[212] and the highest treasure,[213] for winning the love of a man or a woman,[214] for destroying the wife's lover,[215] for conceiving or not conceiving according to one's will,[216] for having desired offspring[217] and for ensuring that one's children did not perish before one.[218] New details about laying down the fire were being worked out, e.g. the Triṇāciketas fire preached by Yama and named after the apt pupil Naciketas.[219] Great emphasis was laid on preserving the household fires and offering daily oblations to them. This was to be followed up by Darśa, Paurṇamāsa, Cāturmāsya, Āgrāyaṇa and Bali-Vaiśvadeva.[220] It was the first duty of the householder to perform sacrifices.[221] For the brahmacārin, all these works were considered to be performed if only he adhered to his brahmacarya.[222] It was only for the hermits that mere rituals did not suffice. For them, rituals were like frail boats, unable to carry them ashore.[223] They had to follow it up with truth, faith and austerity. The ascetic depended entirely on meditation for his salvation. Once he realized the Ātman and Brahman, he easily went across the ocean of distress.[224]

It was this unity of purpose but diversity of paths that led some scholars to form the misconception that the Upanishads are opposed to the sacrificial cult of the Vedas.[225] In actual fact, the Upanishads are directly in line of the Vedic tradition, continuing with the sacrifices but at the same time elaborating upon the philosophical points raised in the earlier literature. They represent the Jñāna part of the Vedic literature as opposed to the Karma-part. That is why they lay greater emphasis on meditation than on actual rituals.[226] Those who belonged to the older school of thought, glorifying rituals, were accepting this new trend with the utmost reluctance. This is evident from a passage in the Bṛhadāraṇyaka which tells us that if a person realized that he was Brahman and consequently stopped offering oblations to the gods,

trying instead to realize his innermost self by offering breath and speech to one's own self, the gods would lose their footing. 'Men are like cattle to the gods. Even if one animal is taken away it causes displeasure, what should one say of many? Therefore, it is not pleasing to the gods that men should know the doctrine of *Aham Brahmāsmi*, I am Brahman.'[227]

It seems a whole new conceptual scheme was being introduced in which the function of sacrifice was radically altered. The sacrificial tradition was being superseded by that of sacrificial understanding.[228] It was not enough to perform sacrifices but to perform them with knowledge and faith. A clear understanding of the significance of every word or act was essential. The Bṛhadāraṇyaka mentions the three worlds of men, the fathers and the gods being won by offspring, works and knowledge, respectively.[229] The works, which included sacrifices, works of public benefit and almsgiving merely led to a transitory heaven, from whence man came back on earth after having exhausted his credit. But, austerity, faith and knowledge led him to his permanent abode from whence there was no return.[230] Knowledge was qualified as *Preya* and *Śreya*; *Parā* and *Aparā* or the true and the false.[231] The false knowledge preached by the Brāhmaṇas was capable of taking the man across death and decay, but only the true knowledge led to immortality and permanent bliss.[232]

Even the concept of sacrifice had undergone a sea change. Instead of killing a horse at the Aśvamedha, it was enough to meditate upon the universe as a horse about to be sacrificed.[233] Man was also compared to the sacrifice. The first twenty-four years of his life were like the morning libation, which he offered to the Vasus. The next forty-four years were like the mid-day libation, offered to the Rudras and the next forty-eight years were like the evening libation offered to the Ādityas.[234] When a man hungered, thirsted and abstained from pleasure that was *Dīkshā*, the initiation, when he laughed, ate and delighted that was *Upasad*, the days when the sacrificer is allowed to take food. Penance, liberality, righteousness, kindness and truthfulness constituted *Dakshiṇa*, the awards.[235] When a man spoke, he did not breathe but offered his breath in the speech. When he breathed, he did not speak but offered his speech in the breath. These two endless

and immortal oblations he constantly offered whether asleep or awake.[236]

The Apāna air has been compared to the Gārhapatya fire, Vyāna to the Anvāhārya pacana, and Prāṇa to the Ahavanīya. The in-breathing and out-breathing are the offerings carried away by Samāna. Mind is the sacrificer and Udāna the result thereof.[237]

There is no end to such symbolical sacrifices prescribed in the Upanishads. Scores of other examples could be cited. It is clear that this new form of sacrifice was gaining prevalence over the ritualistic form.

Religious Beliefs

Apart from the mythological and ritualistic beliefs, there are various other topics of interest, on which the Upanishadic sages advance their opinions. Curiosity about the beginning and the end of the universe is one of them and so is curiosity about what happens to a man after his departure from this world. The popular superstitions and the belief in the existence of various kinds of demi-gods and genii about complete the picture.

Cosmology

The Upanishads advance several theories regarding the origin of the universe. Prajāpati, Ātman, Brahman, Sat, Asat, Mṛtyu, Āpaḥ and Satya have been described as the creative agencies. The most advanced and frequent theory seems to be the one featuring Brahman or Ātman.

In the beginning only Ātman was there. He did not prosper alone, therefore, he parted himself into two—husband and wife, from their union men were born. She thought how can he be united with me after producing me, let me hide myself. So, she became a cow, but he became a bull; she a mare, he a stallion; she a she-ass, he an ass; she a goat, he a he-goat; she an ewe, he a ram; thence down to the ants.[238]

Brahman was alone in the beginning. He did not prosper, so he projected Kshatra, Viś, Śūdra and Dharma.[239]

The Aitareya and the Taittirīya Upanishads also mention Ātman as the creating principle.

In the beginning only Ātman was there. He thought 'let me create the worlds'. So he created these worlds, water, light, death.[240] The space, air, fire, waters, earth, vegetation, food and man all arose from the Ātman.[241]

Prajāpati was described as the creator god right from the beginning of his career. The Maitrāyaṇī bestows upon him the epithet 'Visva Prajāpati'.[242] He is described as standing alone in the beginning and brooding on the worlds when desirous of having offspring.[243]

The Chāndogya allots the role to Sat[244] and alternately to Asat.[245] This mentions the cosmic egg. "In the beginning there was only Asat, the non-existent. It became existent. It grew. It turned into an egg. It lay for the period of a year and then burst open to reveal two parts—one of silver, the other of gold. That which was of silver is this earth; that which was of gold is the sky."

The Bṛhadāraṇyaka is of the opinion that there was nothing in the beginning. Everything was pervaded by Mṛtyu. It thought 'let me have a body', so water was produced. The froth of the waters solidified and became earth. The heat emanating due to the austerity came forth as fire.[246] The same text tells us that only the waters were there in the beginning. They created the truth, truth created Brahman, Brahman created Prajāpati and Prajāpati created the devas.[247]

The Maitrāyaṇī Upanishad shows *Tamas* and *Satya* as existing in the beginning, whence the entire creation sprang.[248]

Eschatology

Some kind of an existence after death was hinted at even in the Ṛgveda,[249] but the Upanishads established it without doubt that only the mortal frame perished after death and not the soul or substance which animated it. It lived even after shedding its outer form, like the snake shedding its slough. It was a part of the cosmic world soul. It was neither born nor died. It was unborn, eternal, abiding and primeval and did not perish when the body perished.[250]

The Chāndogya tells us that those who meditate on faith and austerity in the forest go to the light, from the light to the day, from the day to the bright half of the month, from there to the six months of the sun's northward journey, from

there to the year, from the year to the sun, from the sun to the moon and from the moon to the lightning. There a non-human person leads them on to Brahman. Others who practised sacrifices and almsgiving went through smoke to the night, from the night to the darker fortnight, from there to the six months of the sun's southward journey. But they did not reach the year. From the southward six months they went to the Pitṛloka, from there to the sky, from sky to the moon. Having dwelt there until the Sampāta they came back by the same course, i.e. from sky to air and having become air, they became smoke, mist, cloud and then rained down on the earth. Here they became rice, barley and other such grains. After that their release became difficult, for whoever ate them, became like him. Those whose conduct had been good attained a good birth, that of a brāhmaṇa, kshatriya or vaiśya, but those whose conduct had been bad attained some evil birth, like that of a dog, a hog or a cāṇḍāla.

There was a third stage of the small creatures who did not follow either of these paths and were just being born and dying.[251]

Almost an identical view is expressed by the Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upanishad, in another version of the same story.[252] At another place the text shows that a man departing from the world went to the air, from air to the sun and from the sun to the moon. He went upwards from there to the world free from grief and lived there for eternal years.[253]

The Kaushītaki Upanishad also mentions those who departed from this world went to the moon. In the brighter half it thrives on their breathing spirits, in the latter it causes them to be born again. It was the door of the world of heaven. Whoever answered it properly was set free by it. But whoever did not answer it, became rain and was born as various insects, birds or beasts. He was born again according to his deeds, according to his knowledge.[254] Once he had crossed the door of heaven, he went to the worlds of Agni, Vāyu, Varuṇa, Indra, Prajāpati and Brahman.[255]

Similar paths of the dead were shown by the Muṇḍaka and the Praśna Upanishads also. The Muṇḍaka clearly states that the performance of sacrifices led a person to the

place where the lord of the gods lived. But this was only a temporary stay since after staying there for some time, enjoying the fruits of his good deeds, he came back to this world or worse still. Only those who lived in the forest practising austerity and faith, thòse who were quiet knowers and lived on alms went through the door of sun and reached the place of Brahman.[256] The Praśna asserts that those who had secured the world of the moon by Ishṭā-pūrta were born again. But, those who sought the Self by austerity, chastity, faith and knowledge secured the world of sun and did not return.[257]

Thus, the idea of Karma-phala determining the lot of mankind was firmly established by the Upanishads. The Kaushītaki had emphasized the importance of Karma and knowledge in deciding the birth of a person in the form of a worm, insect, fish, bird, lion, boar, snake, tiger or man.[258] The Kaṭha also shows that souls entered the womb for embodiment or stood stationary, according to their deeds and thoughts.[259] The Praśna showed that virtues led to a good world and vices to a bad one but that both of them led to the world of men.[260]

The idea was further strengthened by the Maitrāyaṇī which talks of the Ātman which wanders from body to body, unaffected by the light or dark fruits of action.[261]

It would seem that there was a cycle of rebirths to be overcome before a man reached the state of no return. The Ishṭā-pūrta took a man to Svarga or Nāka,[262] but if these were performed without the knowledge of the self, they only led to the dark worlds called *Asurya* or *Ananda*.[263]

Popular Beliefs

The Bṛhadāraṇyaka shows faint vestiges of a primitive belief in possession by spirits. It is said that the wife and daughter of Patañcala Kāpya were possessed by two gandharvas who asked questions and replied through the medium of the women.[264] The Maitrāyaṇī alludes to the people who claimed to exorcise such spirits in return for monetary rewards.[265] The passage knows of many kinds of spirits and ogres. Among them were Yaksha, Rākshasa, Bhūta, Gaṇa, Piśāca, Uraga and Graha.

The later-day concepto f Bhakti is already hinted at by the Śvetāśvatara Upanishad, which talks about a man's unqualified devotion to his god and his preceptor.[266] *Pratimā* and *Vigraha*, the terms denoting icons are mentioned in the Śvetāśvatara and Maitrāyaṇī Upanishads but they cannot be connected with images of any kind.

Howsoever rigid the Sūtras might have become as regards the rules of commensality, the Upanishads show a pious brāhmaṇa like Ushasti Cākrāyaṇa eating leftover beans in times of stress.[267]

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4. Chānd. I.4.
5. Kaush. IV.20 यावद्ध वा इन्द्र एतमात्मनं न विजज्ञे तावदेनमसुराभिबभूतुः, स यदा विजज्ञे अथ हत्वासुरान्तिजित्य सर्वेषां च देवानां सर्वेषां च भूतानां श्रैष्ठ्यं स्वाराज्यमाधिपत्यं पर्येत् ।
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8. Chānd. VIII.7-12.
9. Kaush. III.1.
10. *Agni*—Chānd. IV.6; 11-13; *Pūshan*—Īśa 15-16; Bṛhad. *Varuṇa*—Taitt. III.1; *Umā*—Kena IV.1.
11. Brhad. I.4.11-13.
12. Chānd. VIII.7-11.
13. Kaṭha I.1.7-8.
14. Chānd. VIII.7; Bṛhad. V.2.
15. Ibid. III.6.1.
16. Ait. I.3.14 परोक्षप्रिया इव हि देवा ।
17. Chānd. I.6.6-7.
18. Bṛhad. III.9.
19. Bṛhad. III.1.9; III.2.12.
20. RV X.158.1 'May Sūrya protect us from heaven, Vāta from air, Agni from the earthly regions', teste Keith, *RPVU*, I, p. 86.
21. Bṛhad. III.9.
22. Chānd. I.3.7; III.15.5-7.
23. Ibid. III.16.1-6.
24. Ibid. II.24.
25. Taitt. II.8.
26. Bṛhad. IV.3.33.
27. Kaush. I.3.
28. Kaṭha I.2.21; II.1.3.
29. Chānd. III.18.
30. Mait. V.1.
31. Ibid. IV.5.
32. Bṛhad. II.1; Kaush. IV.3-16.
33. Kaush. III.1 एतदेवाहं मनुष्याय हिततमं मन्ये यन्मामेव विजानीयात् ।
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37. Ait. Āran. I.1.1-2.
38. Kena III.11; Praśna invocation; Kaush. IV.2.
39. Bṛhad. II.5.19.
40. Ibid. III.3.2.
41. Taitt. I.4.1.
42. Chānd. II.22.2-5.
43. Ait. Āran. II.2.3.
44. Śat. Br. I.2.4.1-2.
45. B.G. XII.6-7; XVIII.45.

46. Kena III-IV; Chānd. VIII. 7-12; Kaush. I.3; 5; II.11.
47. Mait. VII.9.
48. Kaush. III.1.
49. Kaush. IV.3-20.
50. Ibid. IV.20.
51. Ibid. I.3.
52. Chānd. VIII.11.3.
53. Mait. V.2 Viśva; Mait. II.3 Kratu.
54. Bṛhad. VI.4.2; 21; Kaush. II. 10.
55. Praśna I.4.
56. Chānd. IV.17.1-6.
57. Mait. V.2; VI.6; Bṛhad. I.2.1-7; etc.
58. Keith, *RPVU*, I, p. 207.
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60. Chānd. III.11.5; Muṇḍ. I.1.1; Mait. II.3.
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62. Śat. Br. IV.5.7.2; XI.6.3.5.
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66. Śat. Br. I.1.2.13 यज्ञो वै विष्णुः ।
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69. Kaush. IV.2.
70. Taitt. I.1; 12 शं नो विष्णुरुरुक्रमः ।
71. Kaṭha I.3.9 विष्णोः परमं पदम् ।
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98. Kaṭha II.3.3; Kena III.5.
99. Kaṭha II.5.9.
100. Chānd. IV.6.3.
101. Ibid. IV.10.4 प्राणो ब्रह्म, कं ब्रह्म, खं ब्रह्मेति ।
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103. Chānd. IV.10.1-2 मा त्वाग्नयः परिप्रवोचन् प्रब्रूह्यस्मा इति ।
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161. Īśa 4.
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163. Kaṭha II.1.7.
164. Bṛhad. I.2.5 सर्वं वा अत्तीति तददितेरदितित्वम् ।
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216. Ibid. VI.4.10-11.
217. Ibid. VI.4.14-18.
218. Kaush. II.8-10.
219. Kaṭha I.1.14-15.
220. Muṇḍ. I.2.3.
221. Chānd. II.23 यज्ञोऽध्ययनं दानमिति ।
222. Ibid. VIII.5.1-4.
223. Muṇḍ. I.2.7.
224. Ibid. III.2.6.
225. Ranade, *CSUP*, pp. 4-5. "The spirit of the Upanishads is, . . . barring a few exceptions here and there, entirely antagonistic to the sacrificial doctrine of the Brāhmaṇas."
226. Chānd. V.10.1-3; Bṛhad. VI. 2.16; Kaush. I.2; etc.
227. Bṛhad. I.4.10.
228. Thomas G. Goman nad Ronald S. Laura, A logical treatment of some Upanishadic puzzles and changing conception of sacrifice, Numen (Leiden), 19 (1), April 1972, pp. 52-67; teste Dandekar, *Vedic Bibliography*, III.
229. Chānd. I.1.10.
230. Ibid. V.10.1-6; Bṛhad. VI.2.16; Kaush. I.2; Praśna I.9-10.
231. Ibid. I.1.10; Kaṭha I.2.1-2; 4-5; Muṇḍ. I.1.4-5; Mait. VII.9.
232. Īśa 11.
233. Bṛhad. I.1.1.
234. Chānd. III.16.1-6.
235. Ibid. III.17.1-4.
236. Kaush. II.5.
237. Praśna IV.3-4.
238. Bṛhad. I.4.1-4.
239. Bṛhad. I.4.10-14.
240. Ait. I.1.
241. Taitt. II.1.
242. Mait. V.2.
243. Chānd. IV.17.1; Praśna I.4; Mait. II.6.
244. Chānd. VI.2.1-3.
245. Ibid. III.19.
246. Bṛhad. I.2.1-2.
247. Ibid. V.5.
248. Mait. V.2; VI.6.
249. RV.
250. Kaṭha I.2.18
251. Chānd. V.10.1-8.
252. Bṛhad. VI.2.15-16.
253. Ibid. V.10.1.
254. Kaush. I.2.
255. Ibid. I.2.
256. Muṇḍ. I.2.5-11.
257. Praśna I.9-10.
258. Kaush. I.2.
259. Kaṭha II.5.7.
260. Praśna III.7.
261. Mait. II.7.
262. Muṇḍ. I.2.10.
263. Bṛhad. IV.4.11; Īśa 3; Kaṭha I.1.3.
264. Bṛhad. III.3.1; 7.1.
265. Mait. VII.8.
266. Śvet. VI.23.
267. Chānd. I.10.2-3.

CHAPTER IX

Philosophical Bouts

The Upanishads are principally philosophical treatises, but it must be borne in mind that they do not present the finished product, i.e. they do not expound any established philosophical system. They merely record all the thinking of the era. Cosmogonical, psychological and metaphysical questions, which had been puzzling the Vedic thinkers, were being answered by people according to their comprehension. The answers varied from man to man and from area to area giving rise to philosophical bouts. The winner not only won huge sums of money—cattle, gold and slaves—but also won the respect of his opponents, many of whom were his superiors in caste and rank.

The philosophical bouts recorded in almost all the principal Upanishads were sometimes spontaneous: a militant scholar marching up to a bevy of sacrificial priests and pelting them down with questions.[1] Sometimes these were informal gatherings, as in the case of Pravāhaṇa Jaivali, Śilaka Śālāvatya and Caikitāyana Dālbhya.[2] At other times they were carefully arranged formal affairs with the participants duly invited and a prize fixed for the winner.[3] One such debate, held at the court of Janaka Vaideha, is the most significant of all. It runs to nine chapters of the Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upanishad and discusses almost the entire format of Upanishadic learning.

These discussions almost invariably took place within or immediately preceding or succeeding a sacrificial ceremony,

with a Kshatriya prince as a *Yajamāna* and the learned brāhmaṇas as the performing priests. Thus it is that we find Janaka arranging his prize-money, viz. the thousand cows after a sacrifice and Pravāhaṇa inviting Śvetaketu Āruṇeya to perform a sacrifice for him but instead haranguing him with questions.[4] There are also Citra Gāṅgyāyani[5] and Aśvapati Kaikeya,[6] both *yakshyamāṇa*, i.e. willing to perform a sacrifice, who were visited by brāhmaṇas and had a philosophical argument. Ushasti Cākrāyaṇa walked right in the middle of a sacrifice being performed for the king of the Kurus, and asked the most perplexing questions of the performing priests, who failed to give satisfactory answers and was promptly accepted by the king as his chief priest.[7] Thus we find that philosophical discussions were either held as a qualifying test for the priests before having to perform a sacrifice or followed them. In any case, they were closely connected with the sacrifices. It is not unreasonable, therefore, to assume that in a way the sacrifices gave rise to the Upanishadic thinking. The long-drawn-out sacrificial sessions left the priests and the performer with lots of time on their hands. The sacrificial cook *Samitā* took care of the food, the *dīkshita* person was not allowed to go out of the area and with lots of time to kill and nothing better to do, the performer and the priests pitted their wits against each other. They tried the question and answer game and found new things emerging from them. The questions were usually garbed in a sacrificial attire but the answers came out startlingly fresh. To cite a few examples—

Ushasti asked the Prastotā, Udgātā and Pratihartā as to who were the divinities belonging to their respective duties. When the priests confessed that they did not know, he told them that they were Prāṇa, Āditya and Anna. Now, the institution of sacrifice and the division of labour among the priests might have been old but the concept of Prāṇa and Anna as divinities was decidedly new. Again, Pravāhaṇa asked Śvetaketu as to where the performer of the sacrifices went. Śvetaketu did not know the answer and neither did his father Uddālaka. Pravāhaṇa then told him that those who reside in the forests, meditate on faith and truth, pass into the light, from light into the day, from the day into the half-month of the waxing moon and so on to the world of Brahman. On

the other hand, those, who by sacrificial offerings, charity and austerity conquered the worlds, passed into the smoke, from the smoke into the night and so on to the world of fathers. But their stay with the fathers was short-lived, since they stayed there till the next equinox and came back to the earth by the same route.[8] This was again a departure from the previous beliefs. The early Vedic religion gave people to understand that the performance of sacrifices not only granted material gains in the present life, but also close proximity of gods in the next, and here was Pravāhaṇa negating all pre-conceived notions by stating that it was the forest-dweller meditating on faith and truth who achieved the permanent state of bliss and not the performer of sacrifices!

Another interesting feature of these philosophical bouts is the trend of the participants threatening each other with physical violence. Pravāhaṇa threatened his opponents that their heads would fall off if they did not answer.[9] Ushasti Cākrāyaṇa threatened the priests that their heads would fall off if they performed their respective duties without knowing the divinities belonging to them.[10] Aśvapati threatened the six brāhmaṇas that they would have harmed their head, eyes, breath, body, feet, etc. if they had not come to him.[11] The threat was not only made but actually materialized when Vidagdha Śākalya did not heed the warning of Yājñavalkya. The text records that his head fell off and his bones were carried away by robbers.[12]

It seems everything was not always fair and above board. Take Janaka Vaideha's symposium, for example. The arena was fixed, the participants were waiting, the king announced his intention of bestowing a thousand cows decked out in gold to the winner, when Yājñavalkya, the local celebrity (according to Oldenberg and others)[13] and the King's favourite, asked his pupil to drive away the cows. On being questioned if he considered himself to be the most eminent scholar in the assembly, he returned a most humble, though prosaic answer—"I bow to the best scholar, I just want the cows."[14] Those who questioned him too closely and persistently, he threatened with death. Even that pride of the fair sex, the only woman to hold her own in the devastatingly male assembly, Gārgī Vācaknavī was told "not to question any further, or

else . . ."[15] Uddālaka Āruṇi, who was not only a scholar of very high repute, but also one of the teachers of Yājñavalkya, retaliated, "If *you* do not know this and take away those cows, *your* head will fall off."[16] But even such bold protest was silenced. Jāratkārava Ārtabhāga, who was pursuing a logical line of argument and harassing Yājñavalkya thereby, was taken aside by him and when they returned, Jāratkārava held his peace.[17] Poor Vidagdha Śākalya was called "the fire-tongs of the Brāhmaṇas" and indeed he got his fingers burnt rather badly, he lost his life.[18] And Yājñavalkya emerged triumphant.

The most remarkable point that emerges from all these discussions—'big and small'—is the indefatigable spirit of questioning prevailing in the Upanishads. Nobody is fully satisfied with the knowledge he has. They are forever eager to imbibe more and more knowledge. They travel far and wide and humble their pride, all in the quest of True Knowledge.

The Arena

Apart from the occasional informal tussles between scholars of high calibre, there were regularized institutes—the parishads,[19] frequented by people desirous of philosophical dialogue. The less ambitious went to these parishads only to listen to others and bring their knowledge up to date. Many a king made his court an arena where scholars exchanged views on life and death, the beginning and the end of the universe and the ultimate reality and discussed the rival merits and demerits of each other's theories.

(*i*) *Aśvapati Kaikeya*

As apparent from the name, he was a prince of the Kekaya people, residing in the north-west frontier region.[20] It speaks much of the popularity of this king and of his devotion to the cause of learning when we find him visited by six scholars, at least one of whom definitely belonged to the middle country.[21] It is not improbable that these brāhmaṇas were all residents of the Ganga-Yamuna Doab but when in a fix regarding the true nature of the Ātmā Vaśivānara, they did

not hesitate to undertake the tedious journey to the far-off land of the Kekayas.

Aśvapati Kaikeya, who had sufficient command over this new trend of knowledge, however, was not divorced from the idea of sacrifices. He was about to perform a sacrifice and offered to pay his six visitors as much as he would pay each of his priests if they refrained from asking about Vaiśvānara. Upon their insisting he imparted the knowledge to them.

(*ii*) *Ajātaśatru Kāśya*

He was the king of the Kāśīs and was a late contemporary of Janaka Vaideha. He sustained a visit from the proud brāhmaṇa Bālāki, who was trying to prove the superiority of his intellect before the king.[22] Ajātaśatru proved that his understanding of the Brahman was inadequate and told him how the body was pervaded by the Ātman to the very tips of the fingers and toes and that all the prāṇas were activated by the Ātman. But in spite of this wisdom, he seems to have been jealous of Janaka when he says, "I shall give you a thousand cows. At such speech as this people run about saying Janaka, Janaka", implying thereby that he was ready to offer as much as Janaka. One might conjecture that the king was not so much taken up by the philosophical zeal as concerned over his prestige as a philosopher king.

(*iii*) *Janaka Vaideha*

He was the king of the Videhas.[23] Tradition bestows upon him the parenthood of Sītā, the heroine of the epic Rāmāyaṇa. The identification is accepted by some, but is not proved beyond doubt.[24] The Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upanishad shows him as contemporaneous to Yājñavalkya, Uddālaka Āruṇi and Aśvala. He had become famous for his generosity and his interest in the Brahma-Vidyā in his lifetime. His neighbouring king Ajātaśatru was conscious of the fact and resented it. It is borne out by many texts that the Kuru-Pañcāla land was the centre of Vedic learning before the time of the Upanishads. Janaka himself had invited the Kuru-Pañcāla brāhmaṇas for his sacrifice. In fact, the land of the Kāśī-Videhas was known more for its warriors than for its thinkers.[25] But from the time of Janaka, the limelight definitely shifted from

the Kuru-Pañcālas to the Videha country and Janaka made it so famous and philosophical-minded, that a few centuries later this very land produced new thinkers with world-wide following.

For the uplift of this country most of the credit goes to Janaka, who was himself an intellectual of no mean order. He had studied the Vedas, heard the Upanishads and was conversant with the mysteries of the psycho-metaphysics.[26] He had talked to several scholars but none of them had been able to answer his queries satisfactorily.[27] It was Yājñavalkya who ultimately impressed the king with his answers and the grateful king offered himself and his people as slaves.[28]

Videgha Māthava and his purohita Gotama Rāhugaṇa had already paved the path to this eastern region in the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa.[29] The country was well-watered and yielded lush crops. The king was affluent as is evident by the number of times he announces his intention of giving away a thousand cows to his priests and preceptors. Even leaving scope for exaggeration, we might safely surmise that the land was rich and the people had the time and the means to speculate on philosophical questions.

(*iv*) *Pravāhaṇa Jaivali*

He was the king of the Pañcālas, the land famous for its elaborate rituals and erudite scholars, so much so that its brāhmaṇas were invited to perform sacrifice in the far-off Videha country.[30] The king and his people alike were conscious of the intellectual side of the life and were eager to learn more. The Kuru-Pañcāla brāhmaṇas deserved to be invited to a sacrifice in Videha, since they had not only mastered the technique prevalent in their own country but had travelled to Madra to learn their sacrificial cultus; and to Kekaya to learn about the deeper side of the sacrifices.[31] They humbled their pride and were ready to serve their social inferiors, the Kshatriyas, all in the quest of knowledge. Pravāhaṇa Jaivali himself was the proud possessor of the new knowledge and instructed Uddālaka Āruṇi as to where people went after their departure from this world. His theory of the transmigration of the soul and the threefold path of the dead is one of the most significant and important doctrines of

the Upanishads.[32] He was also well-versed in the Udgītha.[33] We know little of his personal life. An old man Jīvala, mentioned in the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, might have been the father of Pravāhaṇa.[34]

The texts refer to the *Parishad* or *Samiti* of the Pañcālas where an itinerant scholar was sure of his welcome.[35]

(*v*) *Citra Gāṅgyāyani*

Citra is mentioned in the Kaushītaki Upanishad as a king willing to perform a sacrifice.[36] The text is silent about the country of this king. He occurs in almost the same context as the Pravāhaṇa-Śvetaketu incident of the Chāndogya and the Bṛhadāraṇyaka. He asks almost the same questions and propounds a theory which is an earlier version of the Pravāhaṇa theory.

Another kind of assembly where philosophical discussions were held was the gurukulas—the ancient seminaries, where the pupils resided with their preceptors, performing odd jobs. These discussions were different in spirit if not in content. The teacher regaled the students with his ideas about the nature of the world, truth, etc. and the students asked him further questions, if any doubts assailed them. These were educational discourses and not philosophical bouts. The Upanishads abound in such dialogues between the teacher and the taught, the more famous ones being those between Prajāpati, Indra and Virocana; Indra-Pratardana; Varuṇa-Bhṛgu; Yama-Naciketas; Sanatkumāra-Nārada, Hāridrumata Gautama-Satyakāma Jābāla and Uddālaka-Śvetaketu.

The Participants

All the sages who actually appear as contestants in the discussions, those whose ideas have been incorporated in the Upanishads, and those whose names occur in the long genealogical tables may be termed as the participants of the philosophical bouts. Most of these names are mere names, as little or nothing is known about them. Some of them come alive before our imagination in the form of their ideas and schools of thought. A few are more intimately known to the reader by virtue of passages unfolding small details about

their person and nature. Many faint wraiths have been draped around them with glittering mantles of legend by later tradition. Among these semi-legendary figures mention might be made of Dadhyañc Ātharvaṇa, Nārada, Bhṛgu, Kapila, Naciketas, Devakīputra Kṛshṇa, etc. The more human and tangible people include Janaka, Yājñavalkya, Uddālaka Āruṇi with his son Śvetaketu, Satyakāma Jābāla, Ushasti Cākrāyaṇa, etc.

One point that should be made clear at the very outset, is that there is a marked difference between the Vedic seers and the Upanishadic sages. The Vedic seers, *rishis*, were visionaries who had "seen the Mantras".[37] In later Vedic literature, they had already become representatives of a sacred past and their deeds were narrated along with the deeds of the devas and the asuras. The seven seers, *Saptarshi*, enumerated in the Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upanishad as Gotama, Bhāradvāja, Viśvāmitra, Jamadagni, Vasishṭha, Kaśyapa and Atri, come in this category.[38]

Dadhyañc Ātharvaṇa also belongs to the remote past, contemporaneous to the devas. He taught the Madhu Vidyā to the Aśvins, risking the wrath of Indra. Indra beheaded him for the offence, but the Aśvins had thoughtfully given him a horse's head beforehand. Indra cut it off and the Aśvins then replaced it with his human head. The story was recorded in the Ṛgveda and is cited in the Bṛhadāraṇyaka in the words of the seer.[39] The same Upanishad lists Dadhyañc as the direct disciple of Atharvan Daiva and eleventh in line from Brahman. The Aśvins, Viśvarūpa Tvāshṭra, Ābhūti Tvāshṭra and Ayāsya Āṅgiras are the more notable among his disciples.[40] His association on one hand with the Atharvanic sages like Atharvan and Ayāsya Āṅgiras and on the other with the anti-Indra elements like Viśvarūpa and Ābhūti Tvāshṭra is significant. Dadhyañc had provoked Indra by giving away the secret of honey which originally belonged to Tvashṭṛ. Tvashṭṛ and his progeny had reportedly ignored Indra's claim in the sacrifice.[41] Therefore, it was but natural to find Indra punishing Dadhyañc for hobnobbing with his enemies. Later tradition, however, shows them in close cahoots: Dadhyañc is said to have given away his bones to be made into the Vajra for Indra.

We beg to differ from Macdonell who proclaims him a "purely mythical sage".[42] The story of Dadhyañc clearly shows how the non-Aryan elements were first crushed and then assimilated by the sweeping wave of Aryanization.

Aitareya is an important name in Vedic literature. The Ṛgveda supposedly had an Aitareya recension. An Aitareya Brāhmaṇa, Āraṇyaka and Upanishad also exist. They are supposed to have been composed by the sage Mahīdāsa Aitareya, though the whole work is not credited to him. According to Sāyaṇa's introduction to the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa, he was the son of a brāhmaṇa seer by a low-caste woman. As he was not given the same treatment as other sons, his mother prayed to *mahi*, the goddess earth who favoured her son and enabled him to compose the Brāhmaṇa and Āraṇyaka texts.[43] If this story is to be believed, it is one more example of the non-Aryan element filtering into the Aryan stronghold. If Mahīdāsa was indeed the son of a low-caste woman who worshipped the mother-goddess, we may safely assume that she belonged to indigenous stock. The word *dāsa* is also not very common among Vedic proper names. A Divōdāsa, slave of heaven, is found but this Mahīdāsa, slave of earth, was certainly not a Vedic Aryan's idea of a name. The only definite information about him comes from the Chāndogya Upanishad and the Jaiminīya Upanishad Brāhmaṇa, both of which give him a life of a hundred and sixteen years.[44]

He knew the secret of long life: that a person is like sacrifice, the first twenty-four years of his life are the morning libation connected with the Vasus, the next forty-four years of his life are the mid-day libation connected with the Rudras and the next forty-eight years are the third libation connected with the Ādityas. If a person knowing this worshipped the right gods at the right time he was not harmed by sickness and lived the full term of life.

Atharvan, Aṅgi, Aṅgiras, Atharvāṅgiras, Ayasyāṅgiras and Bṛhaspati are also some names belonging to the by-gone ages.[45] The Maitrāyaṇī Upanishad describes the Vālikhilyas as being free from evil, of resplendent glory and vigorous chastity. They asked Kratu Prajāpati about the mover who motivates all actions of this actionless body.[46]

Aruṇa was an important name even in the Śatapatha

Brāhmaṇa.[47] At least four members of this family are known to us. In the Śatapatha Aruṇa's patronymic is given as Aupaveśi. We know of an Upaveśa from the Bṛhadāraṇyaka where the genealogical table gives the line as—

Upaveśa
|
Aruṇa
|
Uddālaka
|
Yājñavalkya[48]

This list does not mention Uddālaka's son and pupil Śvetaketu but other texts do.[49]

From among the members of this illustrious family Uddālaka Āruṇi seems to be the true representative of the Upanishadic spirit. He is found in many Upanishads and in several contexts. He was the teacher of Yājñavalkya and was present at Janaka's symposium in Videha, he had been to Madra obtaining knowledge, he was wanted by Pravāhaṇa of the Pañcālas to perform a sacrifice, he had gone over to the king Aśvapati of the Kekayas as also to Citra Gāṅgyāyani, he even had dealings with an Ajātaśatrava, probably a descendant of Ajātaśatru of Kāśī.[50]

Uddālaka had acquired the science of sacrifice from Patañcala Kāpya by going to the Madra country[51] and the doctrine of Vaiśvānara Ātmā from Aśvapati by going to the Kekaya land.[52] He had learned the theory of Karma and of transmigration of soul from Pravāhaṇa Jaivali and Citra Gāṅgyāyani[53] and the Madhu doctrine from his father Aruṇa.[54] He taught the Mantha doctrine to Yājñavalkya Vājaśravas.[55] His instructions to his son Śvetaketu recorded in the Chāndogya Upanishad cover the entire range of Upanishadic learning.[56]

The Kaṭha Upanishad[57] introduces two more members of the family where Vājaśravas and his son Naciketas are constantly addressed as Gautama and at the same time the words Auddālaki and Āruṇi are used. The passage in question has caused much comment.[58] Scholars differ as to who is indicated by this Auddālaki Āruṇi—the father or the son. Deussen

and Radhakrishnan take it to indicate the father, whereas Charpentier and Hillebrandt identify it with the son.[59] We know from other sources that Auddālaki and Āruṇi could not have been one and the same since it was Uddālaka who was Aruṇa's son, i.e. Āruṇi and Uddālaka's son Auddālaki could not be called Āruṇi but Āruṇeya. The problem could be solved only if the verse was interpreted thus:

"As of old will the son of Aruṇa (Vājaśravas) know you—the son of Uddālaka as revealed by me. Through my favour will he sleep peacefully through nights, his anger gone, seeing thee released from the jaws of death."

Vājaśravas is seen performing a sacrifice and his son, being concerned more with metaphysical matters, is taught the true nature of life and death by Yama.

Aśvala was the *Hotā* priest at the sacrifice of King Janaka. He questioned Yājñavalkya about the ritualistic details and their significance.[60]

Aśvalāyana Kausalya is mentioned as having gone to the sage Pippalāda for knowledge.[61] Aśvalāyana is a very common name in Vedic literature. There is an Aśvalayana recension of the Ṛgveda and Aśvalāyana is also mentioned in the list of Ācāryas. There are Aśvalāyana Gṛhya and Śrauta Sūtras as well. The Upanishadic Aśvalāyana is described as Brahmapara, Brahmanishṭha and Brahmānveshamāṇa. His other name Kausalya seems to be derived from the Kosala kingdom. We know of only one other person belonging to this region—and that is Hiraṇyanābha, a prince of Kosala, who had asked Sukeśā Bhāradvāja about the man with sixteen parts but not finding an answer, had mounted his chariot and ridden away.[62]

Abhipratārin Kākshaseni was being served with food in company with Śaunaka Kāpeya when a student begged of them. They did not give him anything. The student then said that the food that they had denied him had been denied to the guardian of the world to whom all food really belonged. The two reflecting on this realized their error and gave him food.[63]

Apart from this Śaunaka Kāpeya, there is one Atidhanvan Śaunaka who had taught the Udgītha to Udara Śāṇḍilya.[64] The Muṇḍaka Upanishad knows of yet another Śaunaka, a

mahāśāla, i.e. great householder, having a very large school where more than a hundred students resided and studied. He approached Aṅgiras and asked to be taught "that through which everything became known".[65]

This name acquired great popularity in later literature, specially the Purāṇas where Śaunaka featured as the leader of the eighty thousand sages living in the Naimisha forest. The Upanishads mention the Naimisha forest and three different Śaunakas but the two are not yet connected.

Indradyumna Bhāllaveya was one of the five householders who wanted to know the true self of the Ātmā Vaiśvānara. They first went to Uddālaka Āruṇi, who was himself in doubt regarding this subject. So, off they went to Aśvapati Kaikeya. Indradyumna held the air to be the substratum of all things. Aśvapati told him that it was only a part of the whole.[66] Aśvapati addressed Indradyumna and Buḍila Aśvatarāśvi as Vaiyāghrapadya. They were contemporaneous with Uddālaka Āruṇi. The same text mentions a Gośruti Vaiyāghrapāda as a pupil of Satyakāma Jābāla, directly in the line of Uddālaka and Yājñavalkya.[67] A Vaiyāghrapadīputra is mentioned in the Bṛhadāraṇyaka list of teachers.[68]

Udaṅka Śaulbāyana was one of the five philosophers who had taught Janaka Vaideha but had been unable to appease his appetite for knowledge. He had told the king that Prāṇa was Brahman, but his theory had been merged into the wider concept of Brahman as told by Yājñavalkya.[69]

Ushasti Cākrāyaṇa is mentioned in two different Upanishads which shows his authenticity.[70] There are small details about his life which make him come alive before us. The Chāndogya speaks of him as belonging to the Kuru country and having a child-bride. During his lifetime the Kuru land was subjected to drought or probably an invasion by locusts which rendered the crops useless. Under such straitened circumstances Ushasti was forced to beg for his food. A rich man gave him some beans. Fortified with them he went to the court of the king where a sacrifice was being performed. He questioned the sacrificing priests about the presiding deities of their respective offices. They were nonplussed. The king, then, begged Ushasti to become his chief priest. He accepted the money and let the already-appointed priests do their duty.

The Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upanishad finds him at the court of Janaka Vaideha where it is his turn to be put out of countenance by Yājñavalkya.

The word Kapila occurs in the Śvetāśvatara[71] and some scholars have tried to identify it with the founder of the Sāṁkhya philosophy, but most of the translators render it merely as 'the red one' employed as an adjective of Hiraṇyagarbha.[72]

Kabandhī Kātyāyana is one of the questioners of the Praśna Upanishad. He asked about the beginning of the world.[73] Barua sees in him a contemporary of the Buddha, Kakud Kaccāyana of the Buddhist texts.[74] The Bṛhadāraṇyaka list mentions two Kātyāyanī-putras as thirty-first and thirty-seventh from Yājñavalkya.[75] There is no way to ascertain that one of these was Kabandhī Kātyāyana of the Praśna Upanishad, identifiable, in his turn, to Kakud Kaccāyana and providing with a relative chronology for Yājñavalkya.

Kṛshṇa Devakīputra is mentioned in the Chāndogya[76] as the student of Ghora Āṅgiras, who tells him that a man's life is like a sacrifice, for when one hungers, thirsts and abstains from pleasures, these constitute the initiatory rites; and when one eats, drinks and enjoys the pleasures, he joins in the Upasada ceremonies; when one laughs, eats or loves then he joins in the chant and recitation; and austerity, alms, uprightness, non-violence, truthfulness, these are the fees to the priests. Therefore, they say 'he will procreate!' He has procreated, that is his new birth. Death is the final bath. In the final hour one should think that he is the indestructible, the unshaken and the very essence of life.

The name occurring in this particular context has drawn attention of many scholars. Colebrooke first pointed out the importance of this name. Von Schroeder, Grierson and Garbe recognized him as the hero Kṛshṇa, who was later deified. Weber admitted the similarity of names. Max Müller was doubtful and Macdonell vehemently denied the possibility of an identification.[77]

The situation is definitely tempting, as Radhakrishnan has pointed out.[78] His enmity towards Indra is quite well-established. He had fought with Indra on the banks of Aṁśumatī[79] and tried to stop people from worshipping him.[80]

If the Devakīputra Kṛshṇa of the Chāndogya Upanishad and the Vāsudeva Kṛshṇa of the Bhagavadgītā are one and the same, then it is clear that the knowledge, which was acquired in the former context, was most beneficially utilized in the latter.

Kaushītaki is the name of a recension of the Ṛgveda with its accompanying Brāhmaṇa and Upanishad. The sage Kaushītaki finds mention in two different texts—one is understandably the Kaushītaki Upanishad[81] where he is described as performing the three meditations to the rising, midday and setting sun. He was of the opinion that Prāṇa was Brahman. The other text is the Chāndogya which shows Kaushītaki telling his son to meditate on the multiple rays of the sun.[82] The Bṛhadāraṇyaka mentions a Kahola Kaushītakeya as present in the Janaka assembly.[83] The Śatapatha corroborates by mentioning him with Yājñavalkya.[84]

Kumāra Hārīta is mentioned in the context of sexual intercourse being regarded as a sacrifice.[85] The Bṛhadāraṇyaka list shows him as a disciple of Gālava and the teacher of Kaiśorya Kāpya.[86]

Gadarbhīvipīta Bhāradvāja was one who proclaimed to Janaka that the ear was Brahman. His theory was imbibed by the comprehensive concept of Brahman by Yājñavalkya.[87]

Gārgī Vācaknavī is the only female philosopher known to us from the Upanishads. To some extent she shares the honour with Yājñavalkya's philosophical-minded wife Maitreyī but Maitreyī falls short of being a devoted scholar. She had other interests in life as well. She was a 'beloved wife' and became interested in philosophy only when her husband started talking of "going away". Gārgī, on the other hand, was entirely dedicated to the cause of learning. Her presence was felt when she set about, in a most logical fashion, to question Yājñavalkya about the warp and woof of this world. Even after being warned off, she came back with two questions like 'two deadly arrows', confident enough to say that if Yājñavalkya could answer them nobody in that assembly would be able to defeat him.[88]

Gārgya Bālāki, also called Dṛpta, was a much-travelled scholar. He had resided in the Uśīnara, Kuru, Pañcala, Satvat, Matsya, Kāśī and Videha countries. He went to Ajātaśatru Kāśya and offered to teach him the Brahman.

Ajātaśatru questioned him and Gārgya presented all the current theories. The sun, moon, wind were all said to have been Brahman, but were found to be only one aspect of the entire Brahman which was to be found in the deep-sleep-consciousness.[89]

Another person belonging to the Garga clan is Gārgya Sauryāyaṇī, to be found in the Praśna Upanishad. He asked the sage Pippalāda precisely the same questions, the answers to which were given to Gārgya Bālāki by Ajātaśatru.[90] The Bṛhadāraṇyaka has as many as two Gārgyas and a Gārgyāyaṇa listed in one of the three genealogies.[91] The other two do not mention any Gārgya.

Caikitāyana Dālbhya was well-versed in the Sāmaveda and Udgītha. He had a discussion with Śilaka Śālāvatya and Pravāhaṇa Jaivali. He was the first to answer questions. He established the Sāman in heaven, 'for the Sāman is praised in Svarga, one should not lead beyond the Svarga'.[92]

His patronym Caikitāyana, the son of Cikita, reminds one of the Brahmadatta Caikitāneya, the grandson of Cikitāna.[93] His other name Dālbhya is common with Baka Dālbhya who was also well versed in the Udgītha and had become the Udgātā priest for the sacrifices being performed in the Naimisha forest.[94] He witnessed the curious spectacle of the dogs chanting Udgītha.[95] The text also gives him a second name Glāva Maitreya. This might either be due to his being adopted by a second set of parents, possibly his maternal grand-parents, and being given their name or due to some superstition. The Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa tells us that if a man did not prosper he might change his name.[96]

Jana Śārkarākshya was one of the visitors of Aśvapati. The name occurs both in the Chāndogya and the Śatapatha versions of the story. He is reported to have held space—Ākāśa, as the Ātman. He was 'full of offspring and wealth'.[97]

Jānaki Āyasthūṇa was the connecting link between Uddālaka and Yājñavalkya on one hand and Satyakāma Jābāla on the other. The Mantha-doctrine was handed down from Uddālaka to Yājñavalkya, from Yājñavalkya to Madhuka Paiṅgya, from Madhuka Paiṅgya to Cūla Bhāgavitti, from Cūla Bhāgavitti to Jānaki Āyasthūṇa and from him to Satyakāma

Jābāla and his pupils. He also features in the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa.[98]

Jānaśruti Pautrāyaṇa was one of those benevolent kings who gloried in charity. His public welfare deeds remind one of Aśoka. He became interested in the brahma-vidyā after the fashion of Janaka, Pravāhaṇa, et al. His court had not acquired the fame of a philosophical arena and did not attract any aspiring thinkers, therefore, he had to go to a Brahma-vid instead. We hear of his search for a spiritual preceptor and his offer of cows, chariots, ornaments, and his own daughter in marriage, on finding one.[99]

A Jānaśruteya is mentioned in the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa who might have had connections with this Jānaśruti.[100]

Jāratkārava Ārtabhāga was present at King Janaka's symposium where Yājñavalkya won laurels. Jāratkārava had reached the point in his questionings when he wanted to know that after the death of a person his various faculties merged with the different elements—speech into fire, breath into air and so on what then became of the person. Yājñavalkya took him to one side and when they came back Jāratkārava held his peace.[101]

Jitvan Śailini was one of the teachers of King Janaka but his theory of speech being Brahman was declared to be only one foot of Brahman. It was important no doubt, because everything became known through speech only, but it was not the whole Brahman.[102]

Taponitya Paurušishṭi promulgated the doctrine of *Tapas*; Satyavacas Rāthitara that of *Satya* and Nāka Maudgalya those of study and teaching.[103] The names Taponitya and Satyavacas stand for the respective preaching of the man. Among the three, only Nāka Maudgalya is known through other sources.[104]

Triśaṅku is mentioned in the Taittirīya Upanishad. His recitation on the Veda knowledge shows that he had realized the oneness of the self and the Supreme, for he said—"I am the mover of the tree, my fame is like a mountain's peak. The exalted one making pure as the sun, I am the immortal one. I am a shining treasure, wise, immortal and indestructible."[105]

Nārada features in the Chāndogya Upanishad as a learned

man. He had studied the four Vedas with Itihāsa-Purāṇa, the fifth. He knew grammar, propitiation of the manes, mathematics, logic, ethics and politics, the science of the gods, the brāhmaṇa and the spirits, the science of weapons, astronomy, the science of serpents and the fine arts. But even then his insatiable lust for knowledge led him to Sanatkumāra, who told him the true nature of the Self by progressive stages of name, speech, mind, will, thought, contemplation, understanding, strength, food, water, heat, sky, memory, hope, life, truth and understanding, faith, steadfastness, activity, happiness, infinite and the self.[106]

Nārada is a very popular name in later literature—the Mahābhārata and the Purāṇas, where he appears both as a trouble-maker and a trouble-shooter. He played the vīṇā and was a devout follower of Vishṇu. He was free to roam at will on earth and in heaven. The Śabda-kalpa-druma associated him with the knowledge of the Supreme Self—'he who gives the knowledge of Nāra—the parmātman—is Nārada'.

Patañcala Kāpya lived in the Madra land. He was famous for his sacrificial skill. He attracted students even from the Kuru-Pañcālas, the hub of sacrificial culture. Two of his students Uddālaka Āruṇi and Bhujyu Lāhyāyani mention their sojourn at his seminary. The land was inundated with superstitious beliefs. Patañcala Kāpya's wife and his daughter are reported to have been possessed by spirits.[107]

Pippalāda, the sage philosopher of the Praśna Upanishad,[108] is also credited with a recension of the Atharva Veda. He was visited by six theologians: Sukeśā Bhāradvāja, Śaivya Satyakāma, Sauryāyaṇī Gārgya, Kausalya Aśvalāyana, Bhārgava Vaidarbhi and Kabandhī Kātyāyana. They lived with him for a year and then he answered their questions. From all the questions and answers the doctrine of Prāṇa as the highest truth emerges as the most important philosophy. Prāṇa and Rayi together are said to have been the causes of all life on earth. Prāṇa is spoken of as the highest god. It is Prāṇa which leads a man to heaven after his death. When a person is asleep, it is Prāṇa which gathers up all its rays so that all the faculties of the man cease to perform their respective duties. Prāṇa is the first and foremost of the sixteen parts that comprise man. Barua identifies Kabandhī Kātyāyana with Kakud Kaccāyana

of Buddhist texts and concludes that when the Buddha was a young man Kakud Kaccāyana was getting on in years, just as when the latter was a young man Pippalāda had already reached a venerable old age.[109] If this hypothesis is to be believed, and it is no doubt tempting to believe it, it places Pippalāda somewhere in the beginning of the 7th century B.C.

The Kaushītaki Upanishad gives us to understand that Paiṅgya held Prāṇa as Brahman.[110] Madhuka Paiṅgya had learnt the Mantha doctrine from Vājasaneya Yājñavalkya and had taught it to Cūla Bhāgavitti.[111]

Pratardana Daivodāsi reached the beloved abode of Indra by means of fighting and strength and not by sacrifice and meditation. Therefore, it is in fitness of things that the theory of self-restraint is attributed to him.[112] It is pointed out that a man is constantly sacrificing either his breath or speech into each other and knowing this the ancients did not offer the Agnihotra sacrifice.

The patronymic Daivodāsi connects him with Divodāsa, the king of Kāśī. The Kāṭhaka Saṁhitā gives a Bhāradvāja as his purohita[113] which tallies with the fact that Divodāsa was a special favourite of the singers of the Bhāradvāja family. The name Pratardana is reminiscent of the Tritsus and of Prātṛda. The Bṛhadāraṇyaka mentions that the father was telling Prātṛda that some people believed food was Brahman and others believed Prāṇa was Brahman but food became putrid without life and life dried up without food. Only when one knew both these principles, did one gain the highest state.[114]

A Prācīnayogya is mentioned in the Taittirīya Upanishad where an unnamed Ṛshi is teaching him the Upanishad of the Saṁhitā.[115] The teaching includes among other things an identification of Bhūḥ, Bhuvaḥ, Svaḥ with Agni, Vāyu and Āditya, respectively and devises a fourth Maha, identifying it with Brahman. In the Chāndogya Upanishad, Satyayajña Paulushi is addressed as Prācīnayogya and is supposed to have meditated on Āditya as Ātmā Vaiśvānara.[116] He was a contemporary of Uddālaka and Aśvapati. The Bṛhadāraṇyaka list mentions a Prācīnayogī-putra as fifth in line from Yājñavalkya and sixth from Uddālaka.[117] Probably this Prācīnayogya was a descendant of Satyayajña Paulushi.

Prācīnaśāla Aupamanyava meditated on *div* as the Ātmā

Vaiśvānara.[118] Another version of the same story gives the name as Mahāśāla Jābāla.[119] If this Mahāśāla Jābāla is to be identified with Satyakāma Jābāla, it is not the same as Prācīnaśāla Aupamanyava. Satyakāma could not have been Aupamanyava because on his own confession, we know that he did not have a patronymic.

Barku Vārshṇa was one of Janaka's teachers who told him about the eye being Brahman.[120] His opinions on sacrificial matters are recorded in the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, along with those of Yājñavalkya.[121] Twice, they are mentioned in the company of each other. This definitely puts them in the same age and place.

Bṛhadratha was a king of the Ikshvāku line who, having lived a full life, abdicated in favour of his son and retired to the forest for meditation. After a thousand days of deep contemplation the sage Śākāyanya approached him and initiated him into the mysterious Brahma knowledge.[122]

Not much is known about Bhujyu Lāhyāyani except that he was present at the symposium and questioned Yājñavalkya about the extinct race of the Pārikshitas.[123]

Bhṛgu, described as a son of the god Varuṇa, features in the Taittirīya Upanishad.[124] Varuṇa tells him about the Brahman as food, life, breath, mind, intelligence, bliss, etc. Food is made much of.

Maitrī, from whom the Maitrī or Maitrāyaṇī Upanishad derives its name, is mentioned only once.[125] The sage Śākāyanya, appearing before king Bṛhadratha, told him what was told to him by Maitrī regarding the Self and the Brahman. According to him, "he who without stopping the respiration goes upwards, moving about yet unmoving, dispels darkness; the serene one, who rising up out of this body reaches the highest light and appears with his own form, he is the self. That is the Brahman."

Yājñavalkya Vājasaneya appears only in the Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upanishad, but leaves quite an impression of his erudite scholarship and sharp grasp on the subject.

He was a direct disciple of Āruṇi Uddālaka.[126] He defeated a host of Kuru-Pañcāla brāhmaṇas and won laurels at the court of Janaka Vaideha, whose preceptor he later became.[127] He had enough power to threaten others with death and even

to bring it about.[128] Once when he was thinking of "going away", probably to the forests, to live there as a recluse, he decided to make a settlement between his two wives. Kātyāyanī, who was an ordinary woman, "possessing such knowledge as only women possess", did not meddle but Maitreyī, who was conversant with Brahman, desired her share of her husband's wisdom. Yājñavalkya told her about the true nature of the soul, the Brahman and the world.[129] Yājñavalkya is supposed to have been a Kuru-Pañcāla due to his association with Uddālaka. On the other hand, he seems to have been the favourite of King Janaka and a native of Videha.

Later tradition attributes the Śukla Yajurveda to Yājñavalkya. The story is that he learnt the Yajurveda from a guru, who when enraged asked him to give it back. Yājñavalkya, obeying the teacher, vomitted it out. The teacher, then, told other students to take it. They became *titar* birds and picked it up. Hence, the name, Taittirīya. The story was no doubt made up to explain the otherwise curious name. Yājñavalkya, who had angered his teacher and been deprived of the Veda, then meditated on Āditya. Āditya, thus appeased, revealed the Śukla Yajurveda to him. The recension was called Vājasaneya after the name of Yājñavalkya and Mādhyandina after the brightest position of the sun. The story is just what the authors of the Purāṇas liked to make up. But a few facts emerge: that Yājñavalkya had differences with his teacher, that he was a sun-worshipper, that he was a reformer in his own rights.

Raikva Sayugvan was a famous Brahmavādin. Hearing his legendary fame from two flying birds, King Jānaśruti was anxious to find him. The king's messengers found him sitting under his cart scratching his sores. When the king approached him with six hundred cows, *Nishka* and mule-chariots and requested him to give him the true knowledge, Raikva drove him away. On being offered a thousand cows, nishka, mule-chariots and the princess' hand in marriage, he agreed to impart the desired knowledge. He told the king that air among the gods and breath among the parts of body were the all-absorbent.[130]

Vāmadeva is mentioned three times in the Upanishads,

although he had already made his bebut in the Ṛgveda.[131] In the Bṛhadāraṇyaka he declared himself as being Manu and the sun. The passage in question is connected with the famous formula 'I am Brahman'. It is further pointed out that mankind is like an animal to the gods. They make use of men and men offer them worship. Once a man realized the Self, he would know that the gods themselves were only subordinate beings and would stop offering sacrifices to them. Therefore, "the gods do not like it that men should know". Now, if the sage Vāmadeva had realised the Self, he might have stopped making offerings to the gods.[132]

The Chāndogya Upanishad attributes the theory of meditating on the sexual act as the fivefold Sāman to Vāmadeva. The rule about it is that one should either not despise women or steal gold.[133]

The Aitareya Upanishad[134] calls him a Ṛshi and quotes a verse from the Ṛgveda describing how he became aware of all the births of the gods, while still in the womb of his mother. He was guarded by a hundred metal strongholds but burst out of them with the swiftness of a hawk. The 'concept of three births' attributed to him is different from the usual theory of rebirth. He thought that—

(i) when a man put his seed in the woman, that was his first birth,
(ii) when a child was born to him that was his second birth, and
(iii) when after reaching a ripe old age he died, that (his going away from this world) was his third birth.

This idea of rebirth conforms with the hypothesis that Vāmadeva was the promulgator of the Lokāyata sect. In view of the fact that he is associated with the 'I am Brahman' formula, and that he meditated on the purely physical side of the Sāman and that he believed in a man being reborn in the form of his son, he can very well have been the founder of the Cārvak or Lokāyata philosophy.

Vidagdha Śākalya is reported to have been proud of his knowledge and having met his end at king Janaka's sacrifice.[135] The name Śākalya seems to have been popular. The

only existing recension of the Ṛgveda to have come down to us is the Śākala recension. Yāska knows of a padapāṭha by some Śākalya. The later literature mentions Śākalya as the originator of a Śākhā. They might have belonged to the same school and the same line.

Vidagdha Śākalya taught Janaka that heart was Brahman but Yājñavalkya proclaimed it to be only the abode or stable of Brahman and of all the beings and not the entire Brahman.[136] During the debate at Janaka's court, he questioned Yājñavalkya on the number of gods, their nature and abode. Yājñavalkya answered all his questions and then put a counter-question to him, "I ask you about that Upanishadic Being who takes apart and puts together these persons and passes beyond them. If you do not explain it your head will fall off." And, 'lo and behold', it did. Śākalya is the only person who actually lost his life to the opponent.

Virocana was the leader of the asuras. Once when the gods and the demons were seeking the Self, Indra from among the gods and Virocana from among the demons went to Prajāpati in due form. They lived there for thirty-two years and then requested Prajāpati to tell them about the Self. Prajāpati told them that the person who was seen in the eye or the mirror was the Self. To illustrate the point he asked the two to adorn themselves with their best clothes and ornaments and then look into a pan of water. The reflection seen therein, Prajāpati told them, was the Self. Virocana, quite content with this definition, went back to the demons and declared the doctrine that one's self was to be served and made happy and one who did so, obtained both worlds—this world and yonder.

"Therefore, even to date, those who do not give alms, who have no faith and who do not perform sacrifices are called the demons, for the demons adorn their dead with clothes and ornaments and think that by doing so, they will win the yonder world."[137]

Vaidarbhi Bhārgava is mentioned in the Praśna Upanishad. He asked Pippalāda as to how many gods there were and who was the highest among them.[138]

Bhṛgu and Bhārgava are common enough in Vedic literature but Vaidarbhi is a name which attracts attention. If indeed it was connected with the Vidarbha region, then it gives the

Upanishadic culture a wider-spread region than is generally believed. And it is not an isolated example, for the Bṛhadāraṇyaka lists refer to a Vidarbhī Kauṇḍinya,[139] thereby alluding not only to the region, but also to its capital city. The names, though not very important philosophically, become very significant geographically.

Śākāyanya burns with all the splendour of a fire without smoke and the grandeur of an incarnation of the Puranic literature. He appears out of the blue and even has the capacity of granting boons.[140] He is the chief figure in the Maitrāyaṇī Upanishad and all its teachings have been put in his mouth. He talks about Maitrī being his preceptor and the Vālikhilyas being his predecessors. The Maitrāyaṇī is a comparatively late Upanishad, and all that is recorded as the philosophy of Śākāyanya need not be taken as his original ideas, because the ideas were already formed and developed in the earlier Upanishads. Śākāyanya merely puts them together and presents them in his own manner. The Upanishad includes current ideas about the cosmogony, psychology, metaphysics as well as the coming concept of the triad of gods, of the three guṇas being responsible for the causation, upkeep and destruction of the worlds.

One of the Sāmaveda recensions is known by the name of Śāṇḍilya. The Chāndogya Upanishad contains an oft-quoted, highly philosophical passage going under the name of Śāṇḍilya.[141]

"This whole world is Brahman, from which he comes forth, without which he will be dissolved and in which he breathes. Tranquil, one should meditate on it. Now, verily a person consists of purpose. According to the purpose a person has in this world, so does he become on departing hence. So, let him frame for himself a purpose. He who consists of mind, whose body is life, whose form is light, whose conception is truth, whose soul is space, containing all works, all desires, all odours, all tastes, encompassing this whole world, being without speech and without concern. This is my self within the heart, smaller than a grain of rice, barley . . . This is my self within the heart, greater than the earth, the atmosphere, the sky . . . This is the self of mine within the heart, this is Brahman. Into him I shall enter on departing . . ."

All the three Bṛhadāraṇyaka lists mention Śāṇḍilya, one of them occurring quite early, seventh in line from Brahma-Prajāpati-Tura Kāvasheya. One list positions a Śāṇḍilīputra as eleventh from Yājñavalkya.[142]

Śilaka Śālāvatya was one of the three contestants, having a discussion on the Udgītha in the Chāndogya Upanishad.[143] He won an argument with Caikitāyana Dālbhya but lost to Pravāhaṇa Jaivali. He had advanced only one stage further from Dālbhya, who established the Sāman in heaven. Śilaka established it in this world. Pravāhaṇa established it in space (Ākāśa) for, he said, "all creatures are produced from space and return back to it. It is the final goal."

Śushka Bhṛṅgāra, a strange name, occurs once in the Kaushītaki Upanishad.[144] He seems to have taught his disciples that if a man regarded the Ṛgveda as supreme, all beings worshipped him, if he regarded the Yajurveda as supreme, all beings joined to prove his supremacy and if he regarded the Sāmaveda as supreme, all beings bowed down to him.

Śvetāśvatara is the name of a school of the Kṛshṇa Yajurveda. The Saṁhitā, Brāhmaṇa and Āraṇyaka are irrevocably lost but the Upanishad is included among the eleven classical Upanishads on which Śaṅkarācārya has written his Bhāshyas. Not much is known about the sage of this name. He is said to have acquired the knowledge of Brahman through the power of his penance and the grace of god. He taught it to the best of ascetics.[145]

Satyakāma Jābāla is one of the most well-known Upanishadic figures. Even those who have not had occasion to study the Upanishads, are familiar with this name. The story goes that a youth, desirous of acquiring Vedic knowledge, asked his mother about his parentage. The mother had conceived him while she was serving great men, she herself did not know who his father was. She told him, "You are Satyakāma and I am Jabālā. Your name, therefore, shall be Satyakāma Jābāla." The boy went to the seminary of Hāridrumata Gautama asking to be admitted. The teacher initiated him, even after learning the truth. He was allotted the task of tending the cows. While doing so, he was taught by a bull, the fires, a flamingo, and a diver-bird. When he returned to the teacher, the latter also taught him.[146] After his marriage, he established an

academy of his own.[147] He learned the Mantha Vidyā from the line of Uddālaka and Yājñavalkya.[148] We know of two of his disciples—Upakosala Kāmalāyana and Gośruti Vaiyāghrapadya.[149]

The Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa shows Satyakāma (as Mahāśāla Jābāla) visiting the court of Aśvapati Kaikeya, in company with Uddālaka[150] and the Bṛhadāraṇyaka finds them in the court of Janaka Vaideha.[151] From Kekaya to Videha is quite an impressive distance to be trudged along in the days of bullock-carts and mule-chariots. Satyakāma's wander-lust is borne out by the Chāndogya also.[152]

Barua believes him to be among the immediate successors of Mahīdāsa Aitareya, the view being "warranted by the close interconnection" between the doctrines of the two.[153] One of the Bṛhadāraṇyaka lists alludes to a Jābālāyana who was the disciple of Mādhyandināyana and a teacher of Uddālakāyana.[154] If Mādhyandina (which is an alternative name for the Vājasaneya recension of the Śukla Yajurveda) is taken for Vājasaneya Yājñavalkya, then this list puts Satyakāma Jābāla, Yājñavalkya and Uddālaka very close to each other chronologically but the names are given in genitive form, which indicates that the progeny of these three were referred to.

Satyakāma had told Janaka that he held the mind (manas) to be Brahman.[155] To Upakosala he had said that the person who was seen in the eye was the Self and that one who realized the true nature of the Self, went to Brahman by following the divine path and did not return to the human condition.[156] He told Gośruti Vaiyāghrapadya about the clothing of food, i.e. by rinsing the mouth before and after meal one clothed the food.[157] He taught the Mantha-Vidyā to his disciples.

Another Satyakāma is mentioned in the Praśna Upanishad. This Satyakāma Śaivya probably belonged to the ancient race of Śibis. He asked the sage Pippalāda as to which world was obtained by one who meditated on the syllable Om until the end of one's life.[158]

Satyayajña Paulushi, one of the six visitors of Aśvapati Kaikeya, held Āditya to be the Self, but was told that the sun was merely the eye of the Self. He was quite a wealthy person, for it is said that there was "much and manifold wealth in his

family. There was the chariot with mules, female servants and *nishka*."[159]

Satyavāha Bhāradvāja acquired the knowledge of Brahman from Aṅgī, who had it from Atharvan. Satyavāha, then, taught to Aṅgiras both the higher and the lower (knowledge). Śaunaka Mahāśāla had it from Aṅgiras.[160]

The Praśna knows of another Bhāradvāja-Sukeśā, who was curious about the person with sixteen parts. He was once confronted by Kosalan Prince Hiraṇyanābha, who asked him this question. Sukeśā did not know the answer, so, he posed the same question before Pippalāda.[161]

Sanatkumāra was approached by Nārada with the request to teach him. Nārada was already conversant with the Vedas and various other branches of learning but was curious to know more. Sanatkumāra led him to the nature of Brahman through the progressive stages of Nāma, Vāk, Manas, Saṁkalpa, Citta, Dhyāna, Bala, Vijñāna, Anna, Āpaḥ, Tejas, Ākāśa, Smara, Āśā and Prāṇa.[162] It seems all the popular theories regarding Brahman were incorporated in this series of discourses.

The Puranic tradition places the Sanaga, Sanātana and Sanāru of the Bṛhadāraṇyaka[163] along with Sanatkumāra of the Chāndogya, as the quadruple of five-year old sages who were born from the mind of Prajāpati and had free passage in heaven and earth.[164]

Hāridrumata Gautama, in the true Upanishadic spirit, had initiated Satyakāma Jābāla, even after his confessed ignorance about his father and *gotra*.[165] Upanishadic knowledge could be imparted only to one's own son or a dear pupil, but at the same time, it could also be given to one who had proved himself worthy of the honour. Satyakāma had proved his worth by truth, perseverance and faith.

The Emerging Philosophy

The foregoing genres of literature already showed signs of leaning towards a supreme principle from among the ranks of innumerable gods.[166] The first stage was when one or the other gods was eulogized as the highest. But this trend was soon overcome and within the Ṛgveda itself we find passages

which try to emphasise the awareness of the poet-philosopher of the ultimate unity of gods. To cite the words of the poet: there was only one god whom people knew by the names—Indra, Mitra, Varuṇa, Agni, Garutmān, Yama and Mātariśvan.[167] This one god was described as Purusha, Hiraṇyagarbha, or Skambha.[168] The tendency was further developed in the Upanishads.

The Upanishadic sages keep on presenting their hypothesis regarding Brahman. Here again Purusha, Prāṇa, Āditya, Ātman and Brahman come in for their share of glory. If we collect all the formulae describing Brahman, it will read like a glossary of philosophical terms. Taking into account only three of the principal Upanishads, viz. Bṛhadāraṇyaka, Chāndogya and Kaushītaki, the list of matters identified with Brahman amounts to forty.

1. *Vāk* Bṛhad. I.4.21; Chānd. III.18.1-2; VII.2
2. *Āditya* Bṛhad. II.1.2; Chānd. III.19.1; V.13; Kaush. IV.3
3. *Candra* Bṛhad. II.1.3; Kaush. IV.4
4. *Vidyut* Bṛhad. II.1.4; V.7; Kaush. IV.5
5. *Ākāśa* Bṛhad. II.1.5; Chānd. V.15; VII.12; Kaush. IV.8
6. *Div* Chānd. V.12
7. *Vāyu* Bṛhad. II.1.6; Chānd. V.14; Kaush. IV.7
8. *Agni* Bṛhad. II.1.7; Kaush. IV.9
9. *Āpaḥ* Bṛhad. II.1.8; Chānd. V.16; VII.10; Kaush. IV.10
10. *Ādarśa* Bṛhad. II.1.9; Kaush. IV.11
11. *Śabda* Bṛhad. II.1.10; Kaush. IV.14
12. *Pratiśrutka* Kaush. IV.13
13. *Dik* Bṛhad. II.1.11
14. *Chāyā* Bṛhad. II.1.12: Kaush. IV.12
15. *Ātman* Bṛhad. II.1.13; IV.4.5
16. *Prāṇa* Bṛhad. IV.1.3; Chānd. III.18.1-2; VII.15; Kaush. II.1-2
17. *Cakshu* Bṛhad. IV.1.4; Chānd. III.18.1-2
18. *Akshi* Chānd. IV.15.1; Kaush. IV.17-18
19. *Śrotra* Bṛhad. IV.1.5; Chānd. III.18.1-2
20. *Manas* Bṛhad. IV.1.6; Chānd. III.18.1-2; VII.3

21. *Hṛdaya* Bṛhad. IV.1.7
22. *Kha* Bṛhad. V.1; Chānd. IV.10.4-5
23. *Satya* Bṛhad. V.5
24. *Anna* Bṛhad. V.12; Chānd. VII.9
25. *Ka* Chānd. IV.10.4-5
26. *Pṛthivī* Chānd. V.17
27. *Nāma* Chānd. VII.1
28. *Saṁkalpa* Chand. VII.4
29. *Citta* Chānd. VII.5
30. *Dhyāna* Chānd. VII.6
31. *Vijñāna* Chānd. VII.7
32. *Bala* Chānd. VII.8
33. *Tejas* Chānd. VII.11
34. *Smara* Chānd. VII.13
35. *Āśā* Chānd. VII.14
36. *Ṛk-Yajuḥ-Sāma* Kaush. I.7
37. *Uktha* Kaush. II.6
38. *Stanayitnu* Kaush. IV.6
39. *Purushaḥ Suptaḥ svapnayā carati* Kaush. IV.15; Chānd. VIII.10.1
40. *Śarīre Purusha* Kaush. IV.16

Besides, there are individual attempts at understanding Brahman. Two such attempts are worthy of notice, as they come from the hub of Upanishadic horizon and represent the idea popular at that time and space. There is the sage Pippalāda, who seems to have had his school in the Kosala region. When asked about the highest and best among gods, he names Prāṇa.[169] Then, there is Ajātaśatru Kāśya, whose name is indicative of Kāśī. He logically negates Gārgya's all theories about Brahman, but when he propounds his own idea of Brahman, it is again not what was understood to be Brahman by Yājñavalkya, but merely the glorification of Prāṇa on the physical plane.[170]

The Kāśī-Kosala region is branded 'the land of the questioners' by a Jātaka story, so much so that people with little knowledge were mortally afraid of visiting it.[171] The people belonging to this region, at the time of the Upanishads, are seen expounding the greatness of Prāṇa as the highest principle.

The process of urbanization had brought in the era of leisure and reflection. Philosophical-minded kings like Janaka had set the trend of entertaining itinerant scholars and listening to their views on life and time.[172] The opportunity to listen to divergent views and the time to reflect had enabled the kings to develop their own ideas. Kings like Pravāhaṇa, Citra, Aśvapati and Ajātaśatru had theories of their own to advance. Pravāhaṇa and Citra had given the brāhmaṇas 'the path of the dead'—how the soul of the departed fares on its way to rebirth and salvation according to its deeds.[173] Aśvapati had reached the nature of Brahman but called it Ātmā Vaiśvānara.[174] Ajātaśatru gave one to understand that the Prajñātman pervaded the body and made the senses alert. They were withdrawn during deep sleep.[175]

The brāhmaṇas were at the receiving end of these discourses. This led some scholars to point out the contradiction between the Varṇa-theory and the Upanishadic practice.[176] They have talked about a struggle for power going on between the brāhmaṇas and the kshatriyas, in which the ritualistic round of the Brāhmaṇas had gone in favour of the brāhmaṇas and the philosophical round of the Upanishads was won by the kshatriyas. The kshatriyas wanted to beat the brāhmaṇas at their own game, so they evolved a God above all gods, who did not depend on the sacrificial offerings for his 'daily bread'. All along the line, scholars have either staunchly supported this view or emphatically denied it.[177]

In view of the passages showing the brāhmaṇas and the kshatriyas as hand in glove in order to hold their own against the commoner, it does not look as if any such struggle was going on.[178] The Bṛhadāraṇyaka gives a clear example of the harmonious relationship between the two.[179] People cannot be friends one moment and sworn enemies the next.

As to the argument that it was the supremacy of the kshatriyas in philosophical matters which reduced the brāhmaṇas to seek knowledge at their feet, it has been generalized and exaggerated. It is always the king who presumes to teach the learned brāhmaṇas, never an humble warrior. As already shown, the kings had made their courts arenas for philosophical bouts[180] and were benefited by them. They

had the maximum opportunity to listen to the different views and accept or discard them, according to their own discretion. The kings who displayed their intellectual powers were always sought after by aspirants for knowledge. It was the economy of the time that was responsible for any discrepant note in the brahma-kshatra relationship and not any deliberate rivalry.

The next stage in development of philosophical ideas comes when Brahman as we know it today, but seen without the tinted glasses of any religious sect or philosophical system, came into its own. Yājñavalkya had reached closest to it with his description of the warp and woof of the progressive worlds, each following the previous one, until finally Brahmaloka was reached.[181] Not only were all the Saṁhitā and Brāhmaṇa devas made subservient to it,[182] but the popular theories were all merged into it.[183] He created everything,[184] or rather everything was evolved from him and merged into him like the web of a spider or the infinitesimal spark of fire.[185] The concept of Brahman, developed to its full form in the Bṛhadāraṇyaka for the first time, was taken up by Kaṭha and Muṇḍaka.[186]

The concept of Ātman and Brahman further develops into the image of two birds sitting on the same tree.[187] So far as the Chāndogya Upanishad is concerned, it uses the two terms—Ātman and Brahman—simultaneously and without discrimination.[188] Brahman is the universal Soul and Ātman is a minute spark struck off the same fire, framed within the body and therefore, called the individual soul.[189] The identity of the two—their ultimate unity, which was hinted at even in the Bṛhadāraṇyaka and the Chāndogya,[190] became clearer in the Kaṭha, Muṇḍaka and Śvetāśvatara Upanishads. This gave rise to the Advaita philosophy. At the same time, the confession that the two were parted (even if it was for the span of a few lifetimes) gave the Dvaita philosophy its authenticity. Both the elements were propounded with equal emphasis in the Upanishads, without any consciousness of the paradoxical. It was only the later commentaries and glosses and further explanatory commentaries that created discrepancies and contradictions.

As far as the Upanishads were concerned, they were showing results of the creative thinking of the era, although every-

thing was in a flux. It is due to this free flow of ideas that the Upanishads have proved to be fresh sources of inspiration for over two millennia and still have not gone stale.

APPENDIX C

List of sages mentioned in the Upanishads:

1. Aṅgiras Chānd. I.2.10; Muṇḍ. I.1.1
2. Aṅgī Muṇḍ. I.1.1
3. Ajātaśatru Kāśya Bṛhad. II.1.1; Kaush. IV.1
4. Atharvā Muṇḍ. I.1.1
5. Atharvāṅgiras Chānd. III.4; Praśna II.8
6. Abhipratārin Kākshasenī Chānd. IV.3.5-8
7. Ayāsya Chānd. I.2.12
8. Aruṇa, Āruṇi, Āruṇeya Chānd. III.11.4; Bṛhad. VI.5
9. Aśvapati Kaikeya Chānd. V.11-24
10. Aśvala Bṛhad. III.1.2
11. Āṅgiras
12. Āśvalāyana Kausalya Praśna I.1; III
13. Indradyumna Bhāllaveya Chānd. V.11; 14
14. Udaṅka Śaulbāyana Bṛhad. IV.1.4
15. Udara Śāṇḍilya Chānd. I.9.3
16. Uddālaka Āruṇi Chānd. III.11.4; V.3-10; 11-17; VI.1-16; Bṛhad. III.7; VI.2; 3.7; 4.4; Kaush. I.1
17. Upakosala Kāmalāyana Chānd. IV.10
18. Ushasti Cākrāyaṇa Chānd. I.10-11; Bṛhad. III.4
19. Auddālaki Kaṭha I.1.11
20. Kapila Śvet. V.2
21. Kabandhin Kātyāyana Praśna I.1-2
22. Kahola Kaushītakeya Bṛhad. III.5
23. Kumāra Hārīta Bṛhad. VI.4.4
24. Kṛshṇa Devakīputra Chānd. III.17.6
25. Kautsyāyana Mait. V.1
26. Kauravyāyaṇīputra Bṛhad. V.1.1
27. Kaushītaki and his son Chānd. I.5.2-4; Kaush. II.1; 7
28. Gardabhīvipīta Bhāradvāja Bṛhad. IV.1.5
29. Gārgī Vācaknavī Bṛhad. III.6; 8
30. Gārgya Bālāki Bṛhad. II.1.1; Kaush. IV.1

31. Gārgya Sauryāyaṇī Praśna I.1; IV
32. Gośruti Vaiyāghrapadya Chānd. V.2.3
33. Gautama (used for Uddālaka, Śvetaketu, Vājaśravas, Naciketas, Hāridrumata, etc.)
34. Glāva Maitreya Chānd. I.12
35. Ghora Āṅgiras Chānd. III.17.6
36. Citra Gāṅgyāyani Kaush. I.1
37. Cūla Bhāgavitti Bṛhad. VI.3.9-10
38. Caikitāyana Dālbhya Chānd. I.8-9
39. Jana Śārkarākshya Chānd. V.11; 15
40. Janaka Vaideha Bṛhad. III; IV
41. Jānaki Āyasthūṇa Bṛhad. VI.3.10-11
42. Jānaśruti Pautrāyaṇa Chānd. IV.1-3
43. Jāratkārava Ārtabhāga Bṛhad. III.2
44. Jitvan Śailini Bṛhad. IV.1.2
45. Toponitya Paurušishti Taitt. I.9.1
46. Triśaṅku Taitt. I.10
47. Dadhyañc Ātharvaṇa Bṛhad. II.5.16-19
48. Naciketas Kaṭha I.1.1
49. Nāka Maudgalya Bṛhad. VI.4.4; Taitt. I.9.1
50. Nārada Chānd. VII.1.1
51. Patañcala Kāpya Bṛhad. III.3.1; 7.1
52. Pippalāda Praśna I-VI
53. Paiṅgya Kaush. II.2
54. Pratardana Daivodāsi Kaush. II.5; III.1
55. Pravāhaṇa Jaivali Chānd. I.8-9; V.3.10; Bṛhad. VI.2
56. Prācīnayogya Taitt. I.6.2
57. Prācīnaśāla Aupamanyava Chānd. V.11-12
58. Prātṛda Bṛhad. V.12.1
59. Baka Dālbhya Chānd. I.2.13; I.12
60. Barku Vārshṇa Bṛhad. IV.1.4
61. Buḍila Aśvatarāśvi Chānd. V.11; 16; Bṛhad. V.14-8
62. Bṛhadratha Aikshvāka Mait. I.2
63. Bṛhaspati Chānd. I.2.1
64. Brahmadatta Caikitāneya Bṛhad. I.3.24
65. Bhujyu Lāhyāyani Bṛhad. III.3
66. Bhṛgu Vāruṇi Taitt. III.1-6
67. Madhuka Paiṅgya Bṛhad. VI.3.8-9
68. Manu Chānd. III.11.4; VIII.15
69. Mahīdāsa Aitareya Chānd. III.16

70. Maitrī Mait. II.2-3
71. Maitreyī Bṛhad. II.4
72. Yājñavalkya Vājasaneya Bṛhad. I.4.2-3; II.4; III; IV; VI.3.7-8
73. Raikva Sayugvan Chānd. IV.1-3
74. Vājaśravas Kaṭha I.1; Bṛhad. VI.5
75. Vāmadeva Bṛhad. I.4.10; Chānd. II.13; Ait. II.5
76. Vālikhilya Mait. II.3
77. Vidagdha Śākalya Bṛhad. III.9; IV.1.7
78. Virocana Chānd. VIII.7
79. Vaidarbhi Bhārgava Praśna I.1; II
80. Śākāyanya Mait. I.2
81. Śāṇḍilya Chānd. III.14.4
82. Śilaka Śālāvatya Chānd. I.8-9
83. Śushka-bhṛṅgāra Kaush. II.6
84. Śaunaka Muṇḍ. I.1.3
85. Śaunaka Atidhanvan Chānd. I.9.3
86. Śaunaka Kāpeya Chānd. IV.3.5-8
87. Śvetaketu Āruṇeya Chānd. V.3.1-5; VI.1-16; Bṛhad. VI.2.1-3; Kaush. I.1
88. Śvetāśvatara
89. Satyakāma Jābāla Chānd. IV.4-9; 10; V.2.3; Bṛhad. IV.1.6; VI.3.11-12
90. Satyakāma Śaivya Praśna I.1; V
91. Satyayajña Paulushi Chānd. V.11; 13
92. Satyavacas Rāthītara Taitt. I.9.1
93. Satyavāha Bhāradvāja Muṇḍ. I.1.2
94. Sanatkumāra Chānd. VII.1
95. Sukeśā Bhāradvāja Praśna I.1; VI
96. Hāridrumata Gautama Chānd IV.4-9
97. Hiraṇyanābha Praśna VI.1

APPENDIX D

List of vaṁśas given in the Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upanishad:

List 1: Bṛhad. II.6

1. Brahman
2. Parameshṭhi

List 2: Bṛhad. IV.6

This list is, for the most part, the same as list 1. Only 11

3. Sanaga		names from S.No. 39 to 49
4. Sanātana		are different. One name is
5. Sanāru		added as S.No. 49A. The
6. Vyashṭi		rest of the names are identi-
7. Vipracitti		cal.
8. Ekarshi		
9. Pradhvaṁsana		
10. Mṛtyu Prādhvaṁsana		
11. Atharvā Daiva		
12. Dadhyañ Atharvana		
13. Aśvinau		
14. Viśvarūpa Tvāshṭra		
15. Ābhūti Tvāshṭra		
16. Ayāsya Āṅgiras		
17. Patha Saubhara		
18. Vatsanapāta Bābhrava		
19. Vidarbhī Kauṇḍinya		
20. Gālava		
21. Kumāra Hārītā		
22. Kaiśorya Kāpya		
23. Śāṇḍilya		
24. Vātsya		
25. Gautama		
26. Gautama		
27. Māṇṭi		
28. Ātreya		
29. Bhāradvāja		
30. Āsuri		
31. Aupajandhani		
32. Traivaṇi		
33. Āsurāyaṇa & Yāska		
34. Jātukarṇya		
35. Pārāśarya		
36. Pārāśaryāyaṇa		
37. Ghṛta Kauśika		
38. Kauśikāyani		
39. Baijavāpāyana	39. Sāyakāyana	
40. Pārāśarya	40. Kāshāyaṇa	
41. Bhāradvāja	41. Saukarāyaṇa	

42. Bhāradvāja & Gautama	42. Mādhyandināyana
43. Bhāradvāja	43. Jābālāyana
44. Pārāśarya	44. Uddālakāyana
45. Saitava & Prācīnayogya	45. Gārgyāyana
46. Gautama	46. Pārāśaryāyaṇa
47. Ānabhimlāta	47. Saitava
48. Ānabhimlāta	48. Gautama
49. Śāṇḍilya & Ānabhimlāta	49. Gārgya
	49A. Gārgya
50. Āgniveśya	
51. Kaušika & Gautama	
52. Śāṇḍilya	
53. Kauṇḍinya	
54. Kaušika	
55. Gaupavana	
56. Pautimāshya	
57. Gaupavana	
58. Pautimāshya	

List 3: Bṛhad. VI.5

A	B
	An alternate list is given till S.No. 18 Sañjīvīputra. It begins with Brahman and gives only 12 names instead of 18.
1. Āditya	1. Brahman
2. Ambhiṇī	2. Prajāpati
3. Vāk	3. Tura Kāvasheya
4. Kaśyapa Naidhruvi	4. Yajñavacas Rājastambāyana
5. Śilpa Kaśyapa	5. Kuśri
6. Harita Kaśyapa	6. Vātsya
7. Asit Vārshagaṇa	7. Śāṇḍilya
8. Jihvāvān Bādhyoga	8. Vāma Kākshāyaṇa
9. Vājaśravas	9. Māhitthi
10. Kuśri	10. Kautsa
11. Upaveśi	11. Māṇḍavya
12. Aruṇa	12. Māṇḍūkāyani

A	B
13. Uddālaka	
14. Yājñavalkya	
15. Āsuri	
16. Āsurāyaṇa	
17. Prāśnīputra Āsurivāsin	
18. Sañjīvīputra	
19. Prācīnayogīputra	
20. Kārśakeyīputra	
21. Vaidabhṛtīputra	
22. Krauñcikīputrau	
23. Bhālukīputra	
24. Rāthītarīputra	
25. Śāṇḍilīputra	
26. Māṇḍūkīputra	
27. Māṇḍūkāyanīputra	
28. Jayantīputra	
29. Ālambīputra	
30. Ālambāyanīputra	
31. Sānkṛtiputra	
32. Śauṅgīputra	
33. Ārtabhāgīputra	
34. Vārkāruṇīputra	
35. Vārkāruṇiputra	
36. Pārāśarīputra	
37. Vātsīputra	
38. Pārāśarīputra	
39. Bhāradvājīputra	
40. Gautamīputra	
41. Ātreyīputra	
42. Kāṇvīputra & Kāpīputra	
43. Ālambīputra & Vaiyāghrapadīputra	
44. Kauśikīputra	
45. Kātyāyanīputra	
46. Pārāśarīputra	
47. Aupavastīputra	
48. Pārāśarīputra	
49. Bhāradvājīputra	
50. Gautamīputra	

A	B
51. Kātyāyanīputra	
52. Pautimāshīputra	

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2. Chānd. I, viii-ix; Bṛhad. IV, i.
3. Bṛhad. III, i, 1.
4. Chānd. V, iii, 1.
5. Kaush. I, 1.
6. Chānd. V, xi.
7. Ibid. I, x-xi.
8. Bṛhad. VI, ii, 15-16 and Chānd. V, x, 1-6.
9. Chānd. I, viii, 6-8.
10. Chānd. I, x, 9-11.
11. Ibid. V, xii-xvii.
12. Bṛhad. III, ix, 26.
13. *Vedic Index*, SV, Yājñavalkya.
14. Bṛhad. III, i, 2—नमो वयं ब्रह्मिम्ष्ठाय कुर्मः गोकामा एव वयं स्म इति ।
15. Ibid. III, 6.1—गार्गि मातिप्राक्षीः मा ते मूर्धा व्यपप्तत् ।
16. Bṛhad. III.7.1 —तच्येत्वं याज्ञवल्क्य । सूत्रमविद्वांस्तं चान्तर्यामिणम् ब्रह्मगवीरुदजसे, मूर्धा ते विपतिष्यतीति ।
17. Ibid. III.2.13—आहर सौम्य हस्तमार्तभाग ! ··· ततो ह जारत्कारवं आर्तभाग उपरराम ।
18. Ibid. III.9.26.
19. Bṛhad. VI, ii, 1 पञ्चालानां परिषदमाजगाम । Chānd. V, iii, 1 uses the word Samiti in a different version of the same story. Frequenting such assemblies was considered to be a privilege of outstandingly brilliant people—Bṛhad. VI, iv, 18.
20. Supra.
21. Uddālaka Āruṇi is said to have been a Kuru-Pañcāla scholar, attending the Vaideha Court in Bṛhad. III, i, 1.
22. Kaush. IV; Bṛhad. II.1.
23. Bṛhad. III; IV.
24. *Vedic Index*, SV, Janaka.
25. Bṛhad. III.8.1.
26. Ibid. IV.2.1. अधीतवेद उक्त उपनिषत्कः···उपनिषद्भिः समाहितात्मासि ।
27. Ibid. IV.1.2-7.
28. Ibid. IV.4.23 सोऽहं भगवते विदेहान् ददामि, मां चापि सह दास्यायेति ।
29. Śat. Br. I.4.1.14.
30. Bṛhad. III.1.1.
31. Ibid. III.3.1; 7.1; Chānd. V. 11.4.
32. Chānd. V.3; Bṛhad. VI.2.
33. Chānd. I.8-9.
34. Śat. Br. II.3.1.34.
35. Supra.
36. Kaush. I.1.
37. ऋषयः मन्त्रद्रष्टारः ।
38. Bṛhad. II.2.3-4.
39. Ibid. II.5.16-19.
40. Bṛhad. II.6; IV.6.
41. Śat. Br. I.6.3.2-6.
42. *Vedic Index*, SV, Dadhyañc Ātharvaṇa.
43. Radhakrishnan, *The Princ. Upas.*, pp. 395-6.
44. Chānd. III.16.7; Jaim. Up. Br. IV.2.11.
45. Muṇḍ. I.1.1; Chānd. I.2.10; III.4; Praśna II.8.
46. Mait. II.3.
47. Śat. Br. X.6.1.1-4.
48. Bṛhad. VI.5.
49. Chānd. V.3.1-5; VI.1-16;

Bṛhad. VI.2.1-3; Kaush. I.1.
50. Bṛhad. III.1.1; 7.1; VI.2; Chānd. V.3-10; 11-17; Kaush. I.1.
51. Bṛhad. III.7.1.
52. Chānd. V.11.
53. Chānd. V.3-10; Bṛhad. VI.2; Kaush. I.1.
54. Chānd. III.11.4.
55. Brhad. VI.3.
56. Chānd. VI.
57. Kaṭha I.1.1.
58. Ibid. I.1.11 यथा पुरस्ताद् भविता प्रतीत औद्दालकिरारुणिर्मत्प्रसृष्टः। सुखं रात्रीश्शयमिता वीतमन्युस्त्वां ददृशिवा-मृत्युमुखात् प्रयुक्तः॥
59. Radhakrishnan, *The Prin. Upas.*, p. 599, for the different views.
60. Bṛhad. III.1.2.
61. Praśna I.1; III.
62. Ibid. VI.1.
63. Chānd. IV.3.5-8.
64. Chānd. I.9.3.
65. Muṇḍ. I.1.3.
66. Chānd. V.11-14.
67. Ibid. V.2.3.
68. Bṛhad. VI.5; Appendix D, list 3.
69. Ibid. IV.1.4.
70. Chānd. I, 10-11; Bṛhad. III.4.
71. Śvet. V.2.
72. *Vedic Index*, SV Kapila; Weber and Garbe take it as the founder of Sāṁkhya philosophy but Max Müller and Deussen do not. Cf. Radhakrishnan, *Princ. Upas.*, p. 738.
73. Praśna I, 1-2.
74. Barua, *Hist. of Pre-Buddh. Ind. Philo.*, p. 226.
75. Bṛhad. VI.5.
76. Chānd. III.17.
77. Colebrooke, *Miscellaneous Essays*, II, p. 177; *Vedic Index*, SV, Kṛshṇa; Max Muller, *S.B.E.*, I, p. 52, fn. 1.
78. Radhakrishnan, *Ind. Philo.*, I, p. 87.
79. RV VIII, 85, 13-15.
80. Bhāgavata, X.24.
81. Kaush. II.1; 7.
82. Chānd. I.5.2-4.
83. Bṛhad. III.5.
84. Śat. Br. II.4.3.1.
85. Bṛhad. VI.4.4.
86. Ibid. II.6; IV.6.
87. Ibid. IV.1.5.
88. Bṛhad. III.6; 8.
89. Ibid. II.1.1; Kaush. IV.1.
90. Praśna I.1; IV.
91. Bṛhad. IV.6.
92. Chānd. I.8-9.
93. Bṛhad. I.3.24.
94. Chānd. I.2.13.
95. Ibid. I.12.
96. Śat. Br.
97. Chānd. V.11-14; Śat. Br. X. 6.1.9.
98. Bṛhad. VI.3.10-11; Śat. Br. XI.4.2.19.
99. Chānd. IV, 1-3.
100. Śat. Br. V.1.1.5-7.
101. Bṛhad. III.2.
102. Ibid. IV.1.2.
103. Taitt. I.11.1.
104. Bṛhad. VI.4.4.
105. Taitt. I.10.
106. Chānd. VII.1-26.
107. Bṛhad. III.3.1; 7.1.
108. Praśna I-VI.
109. Barua, *Hist. of Pre-Buddh. Ind. Philo.*, pp. 226-7.
110. Kaush. II.2.
111. Bṛhad. VI.3.8-9.
112. Kaush. III.1; II.5.
113. Kāṭh. Saṁ. XXI.10.
114. Bṛhad. V.12.1.
115. Taitt. I.6.2.
116. Chānd. V.13.
117. Bṛhad. VI.5.
118. Chānd. V.11-12.
119. Śat. Br. X.3.3.1.
120. Bṛhad. IV.1.4.

121. Śat. Br. I.1.1.10.
122. Mait. I.1.
123. Bṛhad. III.3.
124. Taitt. III.1-6.
125. Mait. II.2-3.
126. Bṛhad. VI.3.7.
127. Bṛhad. III and IV.
128. Ibid. III.9.26.
129. Ibid. II.4; IV.5.
130. Chānd. IV.1-3.
131. RV IV.16.18.
132. Bṛhad. I.4.10.
133. Chānd. II.13 वामदेव्यम्; न काञ्चन परिहरेत् ।
134. Ait. II.5.
135. Bṛhad. III.9.
136. Ibid. IV.1.7.
137. Chānd. VIII.7.
138. Praśna I.1; II.
139. Bṛhad. II.6; IV.6.
140. Mait. I.2.
141. Chānd. III.14.4.
142. Bṛhad. II.6; IV.6; VI.5.
143. Chānd. I.8-9.
144. Kaush. II.6.
145. Śvet. VI.2-122.
146. Chānd. IV.4-9.
147. Ibid. IV.10.
148. Bṛhad. VI.3.11-12.
149. Chānd. IV.10; V.2.3.
150. Śat. Br. X.3.3.1.
151. Bṛhad. IV.1.6.
152. Chānd. IV.10 finds him away from home.
153. Barua, *Hist. of Pre-Buddh. Ind. Philo.*, pp. 92-3.
154. Bṛhad. IV.6; App. D, list 2.
155. Ibid. IV.1.6.
156. Chānd. IV.10.
157. Chānd. V.2.3.
158. Praśna I.1; V.
159. Chānd. V.11-13.
160. Muṇḍ. I.1.2.
161. Praśna I.1; VI.
162. Chānd. VII.1.
163. Bṛhad. II.6; IV.6.
164. Bhāgavata III.15.12.
165. Chānd. IV.4-9.
166. Supra.
167. RV I.164-46.
168. Ibid. X.90; 121; AV X.7-8.
169. Praśna II.1-2; for his association with Kosala see supra.
170. Bṛhad. II.1; Kaush. IV.
171. Jātaka no. 336, The Brahmā-chatta Jātaka.
172. Ajātaśatru is envious of him and comments on the fact that people are always running to the courts of Janaka.
173. Bṛhad. VI.2; Chānd. V.3; Kaush. I.1-3.
174. Chānd. V.11-18.
175. Bṛhad. II.1; Kaush. IV.
176. Hillebrandt, *Aus Brahmanas und Upanishaden*, p. 10; Winternitz, *Hist. of Ind. Lit.*, p. 227; etc.
177. Cf. B.S. Upadhyaya, 'Gita Comes at the End of the Line'; Baldeo Upadhyaya, *Vaidika Sāhitya aur Saṁskṛti*, pp. 253-4.
178. Śat. Br. VI.6.3.12; Ait. Br. VIII.36.2; 40.4.
179. Bṛhad. I.4.11.
180. Supra.
181. Bṛhad. III.6; 8.
182. Kaush. I.5; Kaṭha II.3.3; Taitt. II.8.1; etc.
183. Bṛhad. II.1; IV.1.3-7; Chānd. III.18.1-2; V.11-17; VII.1-15; Kaush. IV.1-18, etc.
184. Bṛhad. I.4.
185. Muṇḍ. I.1.7; II.1.7.
186. The Chānd. and Bṛhad. both represent the oldest phase, but the Muni Kāṇḍa, i.e. chapters III & IV of Bṛhad. seem to be older than Chānd. VI.8-16; VII. The earlier part of the Uddālaka-Śvetaketu dialogue (VI.1-7) incorporates all the previously popular theories

like the 16 aspects of a person, the sleep doctrine, etc., but all of a sudden it becomes different in contents and treatment and starts preaching the oneness of Ātman and Brahman with the cliche.

187. Kaṭha II.6.1; Śvet. III.9; VI.6; Mait. VI.4; 15.

188. Chānd. IV.15.1.5; VIII.3.4; 7.4; 8.3; etc.

189. Kaṭha I.3.1; II.1.5 ऋतं पिबन्तौ सुकृतस्य लोके गुहां प्रविष्टौ परमे परार्धे। छायातपौ ब्रह्मविदो वदन्ति···।

190. Bṛhad. I.4.10 अहं ब्रह्मास्मि। Chānd. VI.8.7 तत्त्वमसि श्वेतकेतो!

CHAPTER X

Epilogue

The Upanishads represent the fourth and last phase of Vedic literature. There was a lot of overlapping and intermingling of contents, but the general scheme followed the pattern of Saṁhitā-Brāhmaṇa-Āraṇyaka and Upanishad. The foregoing chapters establish a picture of Upanishadic culture as presented by the Upanishads themselves, and in so doing, project it against the background provided by the earlier texts.

The geographical horizon has been widened. The Upanishads know about the Gandhāras in the west to the Videhas in the east and the Vidarbha country in the south.[1] The Gandhāras or Gāndhārīs were mentioned even in the Ṛgveda but Videhas were not mentioned before the Brāhmaṇas. The Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa recorded the story of the early settlers in the region. The Vidarbha country was mentioned only in the Jaiminīya Upanishad Brāhmaṇa, although it is alluded to in the names of Vidarbhī Kauṇḍinya and Bhārgava Vaidarbhi.

The Kuru-Pañcāla land, famed for its sacrifices and purity of speech, still formed the hub of the Vedic and Upanishadic culture in as much as their scholars were invited to Videha for performing sacrifices.[2] But several other centres of learning had sprung up. Among them were the Madra, Kekaya, Kāśī, Kosala and Videha.[3] This increase in the number of centres of learning clearly shows an advancement upon the previous era.

The Upanishadic kings were not interested in conquering vast tracts of land. They were more interested in pursuits of peace time. Their ambitions lay not so much in being called

all-conquering emperors as in being known as the knower of Self. To be called a *medhāvī*, brilliant person, who had studied the Vedas and heard the Upanishads, was high praise indeed.[4] Instead of recording a long exaggerated list of vanquished enemies, they took pride in recording the ideal state of their kingdoms.[5] In all, they conformed to Aśoka's idea of victory rather than that of Samudragupta.

Politico-legal institutions like Sabhā, Samiti and Parishad had changed their agenda and had gone philosophical.[6]

The society was rapidly advancing from its original tribal character to a more complex system. Not only was the four-fold caste-system crystallized into a more fixed pattern, but there was also a hint of division of labour. Everybody did not have to do everything any more. Specific groups of people pursued their specific occupations and were fast becoming recognized as a specific class.

Another departure from tribal customs was the advent of individual ownership. Probably the land was owned by the king, which he allotted to different people, according to his liking, for cultivation or collecting revenue.[7] Jānaśruti is seen donating a village to his spiritual teacher Raikva, but this might be out of his own lands.[8] Yājñavalkya is seen about to distribute his property among his two wives.[9] This incidentally shows that women had rights to property. The father handed over his property and family tradition to his eldest son before going away to the forest.[10]

The division of labour, aided by richness of land and introduction of trade, brought in an era of settled economy. It gave many a people the means and leisure to speculate on philosophical matters. Such people were honoured by the society and their sustenance was ensured by the repeated preachings of almsgiving.[11] They followed individual pursuits. Some of them zealously followed the path of learning by remaining brahmacārin even after finishing their usual term of studies.[12] Some left the comfort of their homes and neighbourhood to go into the forests and meditate with faith and truthfulness.[13] Yet others tried to solve the mysterious nature of the Supreme Brahman by leaving all thoughts of works and their results and depending entirely on the realization of Self and Brahman.[14]

This last was the goal of the Upanishads, what they term the true knowledge (also Parā and Śreya). As compared to this, the false knowledge comprised more mundane subjects.[15] The curriculum of studies included the Vedas, Upanishads, Ślokas, Anuvyākhyānas, Vyākhyānas, the Vedāṅgas and various other branches of learning.[16] The science of medicine, although not directly mentioned in the curriculum of Upanishadic studies, nonetheless shows many anatomical details with more or less correct idea as to their function.[17] This clearly shows that profound thought had gone into this branch of learning.

The Upanishadic economy depended largely on the produce of land and cattle-rearing. Being possessed of much land and many heads of cattle, horses, sheep and goats was considered to be the foremost in the Upanishadic idea of prosperity.[18] Trade and commerce were in their rudimentary stage, but their presence is felt in the mention of such commodities as the salt or the horses belonging to the Sindhu region.[19] The very fact that these objects were known in the hub of the Upanishadic culture proves an organized trade relationship between the two regions. The mention of Śreshṭhin further strengthens the conjecture.[20]

Although the Upanishads do not have occasion to list all the established occupations, as the Vājasaneyī Saṁhitā and some of the Brāhmaṇas have, while describing the probable victims of the Purusha-medha, they, nonetheless, give ample evidence of a diversity of professions. The detailed description of the chariot, its wheel and of the bow hint at specialists.[21] The Śilpas or crafts were not held in a very high esteem. Those who depended on Śilpa for their livelihood were decried as thieves and unworthy of heaven.[22] The artist class consisted of singers, ritualistic or otherwise, instrument-players, actors and jugglers.[23]

In the sphere of mythology, the Upanishads show a marked change from the preceding period. The popular gods of the early Saṁhitās and the Brāhmaṇas, viz. Indra and Prajāpati respectively, gave way to the emerging concept of Brahman.[24] Seen in a historical perspective, this mythological trait is quite significant because it symbolizes the need of the time. The Ṛgvedic era was the period of attack and advance and needed a strong

leader with a warlike disposition. Indra admirably filled the bill. The Brahmanic era was one of settling economy with a stress on increase in progeny, wealth and animals. These mundane matters were looked after by Prajāpati, the god connected with procreation and sacrifice. The Upanishadic era brought in an age of peace and prosperity when people had time for reflection and contemplation. This brought home to the thinkers the futility of the elaboration of the sacrificial cult and resulted in their conjuring up a new Supreme God who was over and above all gods. He motivated them and they performed their functions through fear of the Supreme.[25]

The thinkers showed their leanings towards one god or the other. Specially, the relatively unimportant gods of the Ṛgveda, Vishṇu and Rudra or Śiva, were gaining the proportions of a highly venerated and fervently adored personal god.[26] They were included in the concept of Trinity as described by the Maitrāyaṇī Upanishad. Prajāpati, Vishṇu and Rudra were said to be the personifications of the three guṇas—Sattva, Rajas and Tamas, and were responsible for the creation, maintenance and destruction of the universe.[27]

The Upanishads continued to believe in the efficacy of the rituals, although the emphasis had shifted from their meaningless performance to performance with knowledge and faith.[28] The entire idea of sacrificing had undergone a sea change. Instead of the actual performance the Upanishads prescribe symbolical, e.g. instead of offering oblations to the fire in order to propitiate the gods, the Upanishads talk about the oblations of speech or breath being offered to one's inner self in order to realize the Self.[29]

The institution of sacrifices had become so popular in the heyday of the Brāhmaṇas that its imagery was utilized in explaining moot philosophical points in the Upanishads. On the other hand, philosophical doctrines were projected to explain the symbolical meaning of sacrifices.[30]

Some kind of existence after death was hinted at even earlier but the Upanishads presented the theories of Karma-phala and transmigration, categorically and emphatically for the first time.[31] It was said that those who performed austerities were taken by the Devayāna to the Brahmaloka, the land of no return. Those who gained a credit of good deeds by following

the *ishṭāpūrta* were sent to the Pitṛloka, where they enjoyed a peaceful existence until the end of their quota of good deeds. Apart from these two were those vegetable-like creatures who, not understanding the higher side of life, were born again and again.[32] The performance of good or bad deeds led a man to be born in a good or a lowly birth—as a dog, a hog or a cāṇḍāla.[33]

As regards the philosophy of the Upanishads it might be noted that although they are often called philosophical treatises, the Upanishads do not propound a single system of philosophy. Instead, an entire range of philosophical thinking has been compiled in the Upanishads. That is why widely divergent philosophies are able to claim their origins from the Upanishads.

Many ideas have been put forward, discussed and accepted or withdrawn according to their merits and demerits. The participants of these philosophical bouts came from all walks of life. There were priests, kings, cart-drivers and even the sons of the servile class.[34]

The Vedic thinking found its culmination in the Upanishads. Expansion of the geographical horizon showed an increase in the centres of learning. With these many centres, came as many people with as many ideas. But these ideas were not as hazy and indistinct as those of the Ṛgvedic people. Uncertainty and vagueness were giving way to a more precise and definite understanding. The uncertainty as to whom to offer the oblations[35] was no longer evident. With the advent of the new Supreme gods—if they can be termed so—Brahman and Ātman, even the need to offer oblations had vanished. They needed no outward form of worship but were satisfied with the innermost feelings, since they had no need to come down from their olympian heights—they resided within the innermost sanctum of one's heart and could be realized by an introvert.[36]

Philosophical thinking had advanced to such an extent that sacrifices were no longer held to be the best of deeds, neither did they offer their performers a permanent resting place. The thinkers were not opposed to them on principle, they still held good for reaching heaven, though it was a temporary abode.[37] The realization that the gods were but

secondary powers, illuminated from the reflected glory of Brahman, caused them to aspire for the source of light. As this could be done only through meditation and self-realization, the works were considered useless efforts, ineffectual as frail boats.[38]

This development naturally did not please the gods or their intermediaries—the priests. The Bṛhadāraṇyaka records that 'men are like animals to the gods. As many animals serve a man so does each man serve the gods. Even if one animal is taken away it causes displeaure, what should one say of many? Therefore, it is not pleasing to the gods that men should know that they are identical with Brahman.'[39]

To conclude, the culture represented by the Upanishads seems to be post-Brahmanic and pre-Buddhistic in nature. With the exception of a few extracts in some of the Upanishads, like the Śvetāśvatara and Maitrāyaṇī, the bulk of the texts show unmistakably pre-Buddhistic traits. The philosophical bouts prevalent among the Upanishadic people gave rise to a multiplicity of arenas all over the north-eastern region. Whereas in the Upanishads there were the three centres—Kāśī, Kosala and Videha, the early Pali canon shows scores of centres and a multitude of preachers. The Brahmajāla Sutta knows of no fewer than sixty-two different views, and describes them as the false doctrines—*mithyā dṛshṭi*.[40] The early Buddhistic texts show a more complex society than the one reflected in the Upanishads. The economy, specially trade and commerce, was more developed in the time of the Buddha. The merchants had amassed enough wealth to purchase an orchard by covering it with gold coins and offering it to the teacher. Even if this is an exaggerated account of the event,[41] it is apparently later than the Janaka-Yājñavalkya or Jānaśruti-Raikva incidents, where the king offers only cows, chariots and one *nishka* to his spiritual teacher.[42]

As to the cross references provided by the Upanishads and the Buddhistic sources about each other, it seems more likely that the Buddhist sources knew about the Upanishads, rather than the other way round. The Upanishadic reference to the despised non-believer does not seem to mean the Buddhist monk,[43] whereas the Buddha seems to have known the

Upanishads.[44] The doctrine of Self has been called a foolish one by the Buddha:

"Since neither Self nor aught belonging to self, brethren, can really and truly exist, the view which holds that this (I) who am 'world', who am 'self', shall hereafter live permanent, persisting, eternal, unchanging, yea, abide eternally: is not this utterly and entirely a foolish doctrine?"[45]

As the Ātman was described in these very terms by the relatively late Upanishads like Kaṭha, Muṇḍaka and Śvetāśvatara, even these come before the Buddha.

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4. Ibid. IV.2.1.
5. Chānd. V.11.5.
6. Ibid. V.3.1; 6; VIII.14.1; Bṛhad. VI.2.1; 4.18.
7. Chānd. VIII.1.5.
8. Ibid. IV.2.5.
9. Bṛhad. II.4.1; IV.5.2.
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11. Chānd. II.23; Bṛhad. V.2.
12. The Carakas—Bṛhad. III.3.1.
13. Bṛhad. VI.2.15; Chānd. V. 10.1.
14. Chānd. II.23; Praśna.
15. Kaṭha I.2.1-5; etc.
16. Bṛhad. II.4.10; Chānd. VII.1.2; Muṇḍ. I.1.5.
17. Mait. III.4.
18. Chānd. VII.24.2.
19. Bṛhad. II.4.12; IV.5.13; VI. 2.13.
20. Kaush. IV.20.
21. Kaṭha I.3.3-9; Śvet. I.4; Muṇḍ. II.2.3-4.
22. Mait. VII.8.
23. Bṛhad. II.4.7-10; Mait. IV.2.
24. Indra and Prajāpati as the doorkeepers of Brahman—Kaush. I.3.
25. Kaṭha II.6.3; Taitt. II.8.1.
26. Śvet. III.1-21; Kaṭha I.3.9.
27. Mait. V.2; VI.5.
28. Chānd. I.1.10.
29. Kaush. II.5; Praśna IV.4.
30. Bṛhad. I.1.1; Chānd. III.16; 1-6; 17.1-4; Kaush. II.5; Praśna IV.3-4; etc.
31. Chānd. V.10.1-6; Bṛhad. VI. 2.15-16; Kaush. I.1-2; Muṇḍ. I.2.10; Praśna I.9; etc.
32. Kaṭha I.1.6.
33. Chānd. V.10.7.
34. Chānd. V.3.1-5; 11-17; Bṛhad. III.1-9 for priests and kings; Chānd. IV.1-2 Raikva Sayugvan and Chānd. IV.4 Satyakāma Jābāla.
35. RV X.121: कस्मै देवाय हविषा विधेम।
36. Kaṭha I.2.20; I.3.13.
37. Muṇḍ. I.2.10.
38. Ibid. I.2.7.
39. Bṛhad. I.4.10.
40. Dīgha Nikāya, I.
41. Jātaka, I.226.
42. Bṛhad. IV.1.1; Chānd. IV.2.1-3.
43. Mait. VII.8.

44. Vinaya Piṭaka, V, teste Radhakrishnan, *The Princ. Upas.*, p. 539: एतद् अन्था कथा एतद् अत्था मन्तना एतद् अत्था **उपनिसा** ।
45. Majjhima Nikāya (Sutta Piṭaka), I.138.

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